

An Innovative Student Management: Exploring the Impact of Meditation Retreats and Mindful Education on Mindfulness and Compassion Effectiveness

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Abstract: An Innovative Student Management: Exploring the Impact of Meditation Retreats and Mindful Education on Mindfulness and Compassion Effectiveness. Objective: This study aims to determine the effectiveness of Innovative Student Management (ISM) through the integration of meditation retreats, mindful living education, and compassion-based pedagogy in enhancing students' mindfulness effectiveness, that defined as the ability to maintain sustained attention, emotional regulation, and awareness of thoughts and actions, and compassion, defined as the capacity for empathy and prosocial concern toward others. The research explicitly investigates how these practices influence students' emotional regulation, empathy, and behavioural outcomes within Buddhist-based educational contexts. **Methods:** Using a mixed-methods design, the study combines a qualitative case study, literature synthesis, and a quantitative survey involving 120 students aged 11–17 from Buddhist schools in Palembang. Quantitative data were analyzed using multiple linear regression analysis, while qualitative data from interviews and observations were thematically analyzed to provide contextualization for the statistical results. **Findings:** Regression analysis showed that meditation retreats ($\hat{\alpha} = 0.38, p < 0.01$) and mindful living education ($\hat{\alpha} = 0.42, p < 0.01$) significantly predicted mindfulness effectiveness, which in turn mediated the increase in compassion ($\hat{\alpha} = 0.47, p < 0.001$). Qualitative findings supported these results, showing enhanced emotional awareness and peer empathy, as well as reduced impulsivity. The integration of both datasets confirmed that ISM fosters emotional regulation and prosocial behaviour while mitigating bullying tendencies. **Conclusion:** This study concludes that integrating mindfulness and compassion-based management in education effectively fosters students' socio-emotional development. However, its cultural specificity and limited sample suggest the need for longitudinal, cross-cultural research and teacher training adaptations to ensure broader applicability. The findings contribute empirically to educational management theory by linking Buddhist-inspired pedagogies to measurable emotional and behavioral outcomes.

Keywords: innovative student management, mindfulness in education, compassionate student, meditation retreat, mindful living education.

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■ INTRODUCTION

Indonesia, renowned for its rich cultural diversity and spiritual traditions, stands at the crossroads of educational transformation. As the largest archipelago in the world, Indonesia faces challenges that demand innovative and holistic approaches to education (Brooks et al., 2020). Globalization and socio-economic complexities not only push for academic excellence but also require education to serve as a medium for cultivating peace, compassion, and mindfulness among young people (Timur Tresnanti et al., 2024). Education, a cornerstone of national development, has the potential to cultivate values that transcend cultural and religious boundaries. In Indonesia, where Buddhism coexists harmoniously with other major religions, Buddhist educational principles offer a robust framework for addressing students' spiritual and emotional needs while preparing them to contribute meaningfully to global peace (Ager et al., 2015).

In this context, Innovative Student Management (ISM) emerges as an integrative educational management model that unites cognitive development, emotional intelligence, ethical behaviour, and global responsibility. Conceptually, ISM draws on contemporary educational management theories that emphasise transformational leadership, emotional governance, and values-based management (Black, 2000; Surendran, 2020). ISM redefines student management not merely as administrative control, but as a strategic and compassionate process that nurtures students' holistic potential, bridging academic rigour with emotional and ethical cultivation.

Recent educational management theories have largely emphasized efficiency, performance accountability, and behavioural discipline (Bush & Middlewood, 2005; W. Hoy & Miskel, 2013). While these models have improved structural management and academic outcomes, they often overlook the affective and reflective dimensions of student growth, particularly mindfulness, emotional balance, and compassion.

Contemporary challenges, such as stress, social disconnection, and declining empathy among students, reveal the limitations of traditional frameworks that treat learners as subjects of control rather than as holistic individuals. This theoretical gap highlights the need for an innovative framework that integrates emotional awareness and ethical sensitivity into student management practices.

The ISM model is designed as a mindfulness-based approach that bridges cognitive, emotional, and moral development. Unlike conventional student management systems that mainly focus on behavioral regulation, ISM embeds principles of mindful awareness and compassionate interaction into daily educational management. It builds on the foundational insights of mindfulness-based education (Schonert-Reichl et al., 2015) and compassion-centred pedagogy (Jazaieri, 2018; Ludvik & Eberhart, 2018) while recontextualising them within an administrative and character-building framework. It makes ISM distinct as a transformative management model that not only structures school discipline but also cultivates emotional intelligence and compassion as integral dimensions of student character formation.

Terminologically, ISM can be defined as a systematic approach to student management that integrates the principles of modern education management with humanitarian, spiritual, and social ethical values. This approach not only emphasizes aspects of student control, supervision, and discipline as is common in conventional management models (Forbes et al., 2021; W. K. Hoy & Miskel, 2012), but it also emphasizes character building, strengthening emotional well-being, and fostering social responsibility through reflective practices such as meditation, mindfulness, and compassion. In perspective (Robbins & Coulter, 2017), Innovation in education management is realized when the human management process is directed to foster intrinsic motivation and a sense of meaning towards learning goals.

Thus, the ISM serves as a conceptual framework that integrates participatory management theory and transformational leadership with spiritual values, ensuring students are not only seen as objects of administrative management but rather as active subjects in the development of self-potential, character, and social empathy. This approach is also aligned with the research of Escrivão & Da Silva (2019) on moral and reflective leadership, which emphasizes the importance of the human dimension in every educational decision-making process (Leithwood et al., 2004). Therefore, ISM demands collaboration between principals, teachers, counsellors, and the school community in creating an educational ecosystem that is humanistic, reflective, and balance-oriented between academic achievement and moral formation.

ISM-based mindfulness is a transformative educational framework that integrates mindful awareness, emotional regulation, and compassionate interaction into school management systems. This approach enhances students' character development by fostering self-awareness, empathy, and altruistic behavior, thereby promoting balanced personal growth and nurturing compassionate, collaborative, and socially responsible learners. Mindfulness-based education has been empirically shown to enhance students' cognitive and socio-emotional competencies (Schonert-Reichl et al., 2015). Moreover, Ludvik and Eberhart (2018) emphasize that mindful compassion practices are essential for cultivating social and emotional learning (SEL), helping students internalize empathy, reflection, and prosocial engagement. In addition, Jazaieri (2018) highlights that integrating compassion-oriented mindfulness from preschool through higher education builds a caring school culture that supports holistic character formation. Together, these studies confirm that ISM grounded in mindfulness effectively promotes compassionate character development within educational contexts.

Buddhism, although practiced by only 0.71% of Indonesia's 282 million population, makes significant contributions to education, culture, and social life (Widaningsih, 2017). Rooted in compassion, mindfulness, and ethics, it aligns with Indonesia's pluralistic values of harmony and respect (Syukur, 2022). In South Sumatra, particularly in Palembang, Buddhist students play a strategic role, comprising 4,637 junior and senior high school students, which accounts for 8.87% of the local Buddhist community. It highlights the potential of Buddhist-inspired ISM in shaping future generations toward harmony and global peace (Critchley, 2020).

According to data from the Indonesian Population Centre (2024), the Buddhist population declined slightly, from 0.73% in 2022 to 0.71% in 2024, representing approximately two million people out of a total population of 282 million. Despite being a minority group, the Buddhist community holds strategic value in education because its philosophical tradition provides a framework for emotional regulation, inner peace, and social ethics, values that are increasingly needed in the context of modern education, characterized by increased academic stress, social pressure, and decreased student engagement. In South Sumatra, especially Palembang, there are about 67,583 Buddhists or 0.76% of the total population of 8.8 million people, of which 52,269 are in the city of Palembang, with 4,637 students at the junior and high school levels (8.87% of the local Buddhist population).

These data show that, although small in proportion, this group presents a microcosm of national educational challenges faced by students experiencing academic stress and psychological distress. It has great potential to apply the values of mindfulness and compassion as strategies for strengthening emotional well-being and learning engagement. Empirical studies in Indonesia and the world show increasing levels of stress, anxiety, and student disengagement in a post-pandemic

learning environment (Burmansah, Rugaiyah, & Mukhtar, 2019; Kimura, 2003). In this context, Buddhist-inspired educational approaches, such as meditation retreats and mindful living education, become relevant not because of the dominance of a particular religion but rather because these approaches offer scientifically evidence-based methods for building calmness, focus, and empathy (Chandra et al., 2023; Correia et al., 2017). Therefore, Buddhist demographic data is not only informative but also demonstrates the collaborative potential between spiritual heritage and the need for educational management strategies that address student stress and disengagement.

In an increasingly complex world, developing compassion in students is crucial for fostering ethical behavior and social harmony. The integration of mindfulness into education offers an effective means of promoting self-awareness and empathy (Burmansah et al., 2020). Mindfulness is understood as the full awareness of the present experience without judgment, a concept rooted in Buddhist philosophy that has become a universal practice across various fields, including education, psychology, and health. In the context of this study, mindfulness is defined as being fully aware of current experiences intentionally and without judgment, encompassing both cognitive (focus and attention) and affective (self-acceptance and emotional balance) aspects (Hyland, 2014). Mindfulness effectiveness refers to the extent to which mindfulness practices lead to fundamental changes in the regulation of emotions, learning focus, and psychological well-being among students. Compassion is defined as a combination of feelings and moral behaviour, encompassing the ability to feel the suffering of others and an active desire to alleviate it (Raj, 2016).

Thus, compassion in this context is not merely passive empathy, but rather ethical attitudes and actions that are integrated into the educational process (Jennings & Skovholt, 2016; Neff, 2003). The value of compassion in education has also been proven to support an

inclusive school organisational culture, foster moral leadership, and reduce burnout among teachers (Budd et al., 2020; Inukai, 2022; Pirson, 2021). These two constructs, mindfulness effectiveness and compassion, are the primary foundations of ISM, which emphasizes a balance between cognitive intelligence, emotional awareness, and social responsibility. Research shows that the application of mindfulness and compassion in education management increases learning effectiveness through increased emotional regulation, social empathy, and intrinsic motivation of students (Dierksmeier, 2016; Rosser, 2018; Tylor, 2016), and supports reflective and collaborative leadership models in schools that strengthen a favourable learning climate (Clift, 1995; Poonvichaen & Sutheejariyawat, 2022).

Previous research studies on ISM have shown that an educational approach that emphasises a balance between cognitive, affective, and spiritual aspects plays a crucial role in increasing student engagement and character formation (Bush & Middlewood, 2013; Leithwood et al., 2004). In this context, research on mindfulness and compassion confirms that the practice of mindfulness and compassion can strengthen students' emotional regulation, empathy, and prosocial behaviours, ultimately contributing to an improved learning climate and psychological well-being (Neff, 2003; Roeser, 2016).

Meanwhile, meditation retreats have proven to be an effective self-coaching strategy that deepens reflective awareness, fosters learning discipline, and strengthens students' emotional balance (Laidlaw & Mair, 2019; Lesmana & Bidanghan, 2021). However, research that comprehensively integrates the three dimensions of mindfulness, compassion, and meditation retreat within the framework of Innovative Student Management remains limited, especially in the context of Buddhist education in Indonesia. Therefore, this research has both theoretical and practical novelty value in the development of a holistic education management model.

Additionally, an ongoing academic debate persists about how spirituality-based practices can be effectively integrated into secular educational institutions without inadvertently fostering religious bias. This challenge arises because the integration of spiritual values, such as mindfulness and compassion, is often considered to be contrary to the modern educational management paradigm, which is oriented towards efficiency and administrative rationality (Holder, 1982; Ibrahim & Abdalla, 2017). On the other hand, there are still limitations in quantitative research and mixed methods that empirically test the impact of meditation retreats on students' emotion regulation, social empathy, and ethical decision-making.

In fact, various studies have shown that mindfulness-based retreats can enhance self-regulation and social responsibility in students, while strengthening the emotional dimension in student management (Ally & Prieto-Blázquez, 2014; Valentine, Godkin, & Varca, 2010). In the context of globalization and increasingly complex academic pressures, the need for an Innovative Student Management (IMS) model is urgent needed, not only emphasizing intellectual achievement but also fostering psychological balance and social maturity. Therefore, this research was conducted to fill this gap by integrating the practice of meditation retreat and mindful living into an innovative educational management framework, based on Buddhist philosophy and universal human values that can be adapted in the context of secular education (Ajudeonu & Ossai, 2022; Aloni, 2002).

The methodological approach of this research aims to connect the spiritual and managerial aspects in educational practice. Through a mixed-methods design, this study combines the power of qualitative analysis to explore the meaning and experience of students in meditation retreats with a quantitative approach to measure the effectiveness of mindfulness and compassion on student engagement and well-

being. This design aligns with the principles of modern education management, which emphasises evidence-based decision-making and reflective practice as the foundation for enhancing the quality of education (Atkinson, 2013; Perez & Lumaad, 2021). Thus, this research is not only exploratory in understanding the integration of spiritual practices into education management but also applicable in formulating an ISM model that is oriented towards intellectual, emotional, and moral balance in a sustainable manner.

This study employs a mixed-methods approach that combines two primary methods: qualitative case studies and quantitative surveys. A qualitative approach is used to gain a deep understanding of the practice of meditation retreats, mindful living education, and its implementation in the context of Buddhist educational institutions in Palembang, through observation, interviews, and document analysis. This approach enables researchers to capture the phenomenological meaning and subjective experiences of students as they develop awareness and compassion. Meanwhile, a quantitative approach was employed through a survey of Buddhist junior and senior high school students to statistically assess the relationship between the variables of meditation retreat, mindfulness effectiveness, and compassion.

The combination of these two approaches enables a more comprehensive and triangulated analysis: qualitative data provides contextual depth to spiritual and managerial practices in schools. In contrast, quantitative data reinforces empirical validity through standardised measurements (Cresswell, 2009). This design aims to show how contemplative practices, like meditation, influence individual consciousness and inspire more humanistic, reflective, and empathy-based student management models (Naeem, Aparicio-Ting, & Dyjur, 2020).

Based on this background, this study aims to analyze and develop an ISM model based on Buddhist educational values that integrates the practice of meditation retreats, mindful living

education, and strengthening the effectiveness of mindfulness and compassion in the context of education management in Indonesia. The specific objectives of this research include: defining and conceptualizing ISM based on Buddhist educational philosophy and contemporary education management theory; analyze the role of meditation retreats and mindful living education in improving students' mindfulness effectiveness; assessing the influence of mindfulness effectiveness on compassion as a form of affective development and social ethics of students; and develop a conceptual model of ISM based on mindfulness and compassion that can be applied to Indonesia's multicultural educational environment.

The main question of this study is how the implementation of meditation retreats and mindful living education can enhance the effectiveness of students' mindfulness and compassion within the framework of ISM in Indonesia. This question highlights the functional relationship between two primary dependent constructs: the extent to which increased mindfulness effectiveness contributes to the development of compassion, which is reflected in ethical behaviour, social empathy, and emotional balance among students. Based on this framework, this study hypothesizes that meditation retreats have a positive effect on students' mindfulness effectiveness; mindful living education has a positive impact on student compassion; mindfulness effectiveness has a

positive effect on compassion; and mindfulness effectiveness and compassion simultaneously affect the effectiveness of ISM, which is reflected in ethical behavior, learning engagement, and emotional well-being of students.

This research is expected to make both theoretical and practical contributions to the development of educational management that is oriented towards humanity, equity, and social ethics. Theoretically, this research bridges the gap between spiritual pedagogy and educational management science through a Buddhist approach that emphasizes mindfulness and compassion as the foundation of sustainable student management. Practically, the research results are expected to serve as a reference for the development of more humanistic and inclusive educational policies and practices, aligning with the values of cooperation, tolerance, and *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*, which characterize the Indonesian nation. The integration of these values into the education system will strengthen the school's role as a space for the formation of intellectually intelligent, emotionally mature, and morally noble human beings towards an education that fosters peace, empathy, and global responsibility. This study thus provides a novel framework linking contemplative Buddhist education, mindfulness-based compassion development, and ISM within the Indonesian educational context.

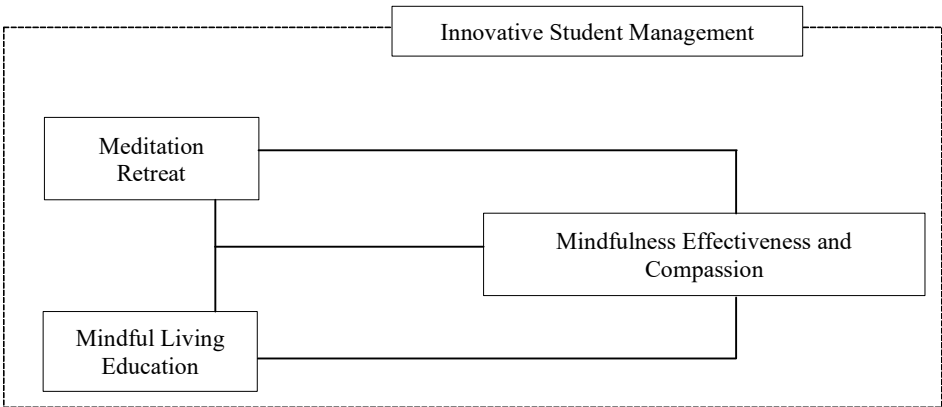


Figure 1. Research conceptual design framework

■ METHOD

Research Designs

This study employed a mixed-methods approach, integrating quantitative survey analysis with qualitative insights drawn from a single case study and a comprehensive literature review (Jason & Glenwick, 2016; Kroll & Neri, 2009). This approach enables a nuanced understanding of how meditation retreats and mindful living education promote compassionate action, self-awareness, and innovative student management practices within Buddhist-inspired educational contexts. The mixed-methods strategy enables triangulation between theoretical perspectives and empirical findings, ensuring both depth and analytical rigor (Cresswell, 2009; Doyle, Brady, & Byrne, 2009). The study population comprised 160 students aged 11–17 who participated in a week-long mindfulness retreat in Palembang, Indonesia. From this population, 120 students were selected using a purposive sampling technique, as determined by the Slovin formula.

The sample size was determined based on information power, ensuring sufficient representation of experiences relevant to the research objectives while maintaining data quality and manageability. Inclusion criteria included students who: (a) had completed the entire retreat program; (b) were active members of Buddhist educational institutions or monasteries in Palembang; and (c) voluntarily consented to participate in the study. Exclusion criteria included students who: (a) did not complete the retreat; or (b) had advanced meditation experience exceeding one year, which could introduce experiential bias. Although participants shared a Buddhist educational background, variations in age, prior experience, and motivation for participation were acknowledged and treated as contextual factors that influenced outcomes, rather than assuming homogeneity.

For qualitative analysis, the study employed Yin's (2009) pattern-matching technique within a single-case design, comparing observed

patterns (e.g., emotional regulation, empathy development, and interpersonal awareness) with theoretical constructs derived from Buddhist educational frameworks and social-emotional learning theories (Yin, 2009). The bibliographic analysis synthesized prior empirical and conceptual studies to refine the theoretical model, identifying recurring constructs of mindfulness and compassion that informed the interpretation of the data. For quantitative analysis, data were processed using *SPSS version 26*, employing multiple regression and path analysis to assess the relationships between meditation retreat participation, mindful living education, and students' mindfulness effectiveness in terms of compassion (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This design provides a balanced methodological foundation that connects statistical findings with contextual insights, contributing to a holistic model of innovative student management grounded in mindfulness and compassion-based educational theory.

Survey Instrument

A structured questionnaire was developed based on the literature review and the conceptual framework of Buddhist-inspired education, mindfulness, and compassion (Cresswell, 2009; Yin, 2009). The purpose of the instrument was to assess students' mindfulness effectiveness and compassion as outcomes of integrating meditation retreats and mindful living education into ISM. The questionnaire consisted of two main sections. The first section included demographic data such as age, gender, duration of retreat participation, and prior experience with mindfulness practices. The second section contained two subscales to capture the constructs of mindfulness effectiveness and compassion. Each item was measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

Mindfulness Effectiveness, this scale measured students' ability to recognize emotions,

maintain awareness, and regulate responses during academic and social interactions:

1. I can recognize my emotions before reacting to situations.
2. I stay calm under academic or social pressure.
3. I am aware of my thoughts without judging them.
4. I stay focused on what I am doing without being easily distracted.
5. I am aware of the connection between my thoughts, feelings, and actions.
6. I accept my mistakes without harsh self-judgment.
7. I listen attentively when others speak.
8. I manage negative emotions so they do not influence my decisions.
9. I practice breathing or self-reflection when I feel stressed.
10. I strive to be fully present in every activity I do.

Compassion, this scale assessed empathy, kindness, and compassionate behaviors toward oneself and others:

1. I feel concerned when others are in difficulty.
2. I try to help friends who face problems.
3. I speak gently and respect others' feelings.
4. I try to understand others before judging them.
5. I encourage friends who feel discouraged or hopeless.
6. I feel happy when I can help others.
7. I easily forgive others' mistakes.
8. I avoid hurting others through words or actions.
9. I respect differences in opinion and background
10. I cultivate kindness toward myself and others every day.

Justification for Combining the Constructs of Mindfulness Effectiveness and Compassion

Although Mindfulness and Compassion are distinct psychological constructs, they are theoretically interconnected within mindfulness-

based educational frameworks. Mindfulness cultivates present-moment awareness and emotional regulation, which serve as internal mechanisms that give rise to compassionate thoughts and behaviours toward others (Dahl, Lutz, & Davidson, 2020; Kabat-Zinn, 2003). In this study, both constructs were combined under the broader variable of Mindfulness Effectiveness and Compassion to reflect the overall outcome of the ISM model, which involves the joint development of self-awareness (intrapersonal mindfulness) and social empathy (interpersonal compassion). This integration aligns with previous findings that mindfulness training consistently enhances compassion through increased emotional clarity and self-regulation (Jazaieri, 2018; Neff & Germer, 2013).

Validity and Reliability

The questionnaire was validated by three experts in Buddhist education and educational psychology to ensure content and construct validity. A pilot test involving 30 students from the same retreat community was conducted to evaluate clarity and internal consistency; these participants were not included in the main sample of 120. Minor linguistic revisions were made after pilot testing. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficients were 0.87 for mindfulness effectiveness and 0.88 for compassion, indicating high reliability.

Sampling and Data Collection

A purposive sampling technique was used, selecting students aged 11–17 who had participated in Buddhist meditation retreats or mindful living programs. While this approach ensures relevance, the absence of randomization and a control group means that the findings are correlational rather than causal, limiting claims of a direct effect. Data were collected through secure online questionnaires with anonymity guaranteed.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analysed using *SPSS version 26*, which included descriptive

statistics, correlation analysis, reliability tests, and multiple regression to examine the relationships among variables. Qualitative data from open-ended responses were analyzed thematically to identify key patterns and challenges in integrating mindfulness and compassion into innovative student management (Cresswell, 2009; Yin, 2009).

Justification for Mixed-Methods Approach

Combining qualitative and quantitative methods enables a comprehensive exploration of the research topic. Qualitative analysis offers a profound understanding of the theoretical framework and practical applications of Buddhist educational practices. Quantitative Analysis: Offers measurable evidence of the impact on mindfulness and compassion, ensuring empirical rigor. This methodology ensures that the study captures both the richness of Buddhist philosophical insights and the tangible outcomes of their application in educational settings (Creswell, 2014).

■ RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Impact of Meditation Retreats as Part of Innovative Student Management

The implementation of meditation retreats as part of innovative student management has a positive impact on the emotional, social, and cognitive development of students. Based on the results of interviews with five informants (I1-I5) and observations for one week, it was found that they improved their ability to manage emotions, build empathy, and maintain complete focus and awareness. Participants showed increased calmness and self-control in emotion regulation.

“I used to get angry easily when group work did not go my way, but after meditation, I learned to be quiet first and take a breath before talking” (I1). “I feel more patient with friends who have different opinions” (I2).

Observations showed that participants were able to resolve differences of opinion

without conflict. This finding aligns with Vago et al., who found that meditation increases self-awareness and reduces stress by strengthening the autonomic nervous system (Vago, Silbersweig, & Brewer, 2012). The retreat also fosters empathy and compassion, reflected in the mutual care and support between participants.

“I became more sensitive. If I see a friend who is depressed, I try to ask or accompany him” (I2). “The practice of metta made me aware of the importance of praying for the happiness of others” (I5).

These findings showed an increase in prosocial behaviours, consistent with Framson et al.’s loving-kindness meditation, which promotes the expansion of positive emotions and compassion for others (Framson et al., 2010). Additionally, participants demonstrated increased focus and mindfulness.

“Now that it is time to study, my mind does not go anywhere” (I1). Observations revealed that participants were able to meditate silently for 20 minutes without distractions, supporting Kabat-Zinn’s theory that mindfulness serves as a means of strengthening concentration (Kabat-Zinn, 2005). Overall, meditation retreats foster a reflective and harmonious environment, cultivating a community that respects and supports one another. These findings suggest that meditation retreats serve as innovative educational strategies that foster emotional balance, self-awareness, and a compassionate character, thereby contributing to the development of a peaceful and mindful school culture.

Role of Mindfulness Effectiveness

The application of mindful living education in innovative student management is practical in fostering long-term habits rooted in self-awareness, emotional regulation, and social responsibility. Based on interviews with five informants (I1-I5) and observations during the retreat, it was found that activities such as mindful breathing, journaling, reflective discussions, and

exercises focused on gratitude and kindness had a direct impact on the emotional, social, and academic development of students. In terms of emotion regulation, participants demonstrated an ability to recognise and manage their feelings more effectively.

"I became aware of when emotions started to arise, and was able to calm down more quickly" (I2). "Journaling every night makes me more honest with my own feelings" (I4).

Observation results showed participants were more open and respectful when sharing personal experiences. It aligns with Kabat-Zinn, who emphasizes the importance of daily mindfulness practices for achieving long-term benefits in stress management and mental clarity (Kabat-Zinn, 1986). In terms of academic focus, mindfulness helps students maintain concentration and reduce learning anxiety.

"During the exam, I remember breathing exercises slowly, so I did not panic" (I1). "It is now easier to focus when reading or listening to the teacher" (I3).

Observations show higher involvement in the classroom. These findings align with the research of Zenner, Herrnleben-Kurz, & Walach (2014), which demonstrates that mindfulness enhances attention and readiness to learn. In the aspect of compassion and social skills, gratitude and kindness activities foster empathy and a sense of social responsibility.

"I learned to understand friends without judging first" (I5). It aligns with Hyland's (2014) assertion that self-aware education promotes the values of compassion and harmony. Overall, mindful living education is effective in strengthening self-awareness, academic focus, and social empathy. This practice develops a school culture that is reflective, peaceful, and character-building, in line with innovative student management principles that prepare students to become resilient and peace-oriented individuals contributing to global peace.

Student Mindfulness and Compassion

The implementation of mindfulness in innovative student management has been shown to enhance emotional regulation, foster empathy, and promote compassionate behaviours. Based on interviews and observations of five informants (I1–I5) during a one-week retreat guided by a Buddhist monk, it was found that there was an increase in self-awareness, kindness, and the quality of relationships between participants. Activities such as mindful breathing, empathy exercises, role-playing, and reflective journaling help students internalise the value of mindfulness in their daily lives. In terms of emotion regulation, participants demonstrated the ability to calm down and manage stress more effectively.

"When I start to panic, I focus on my breath and become calmer" (I1). "I used to be easily offended, now I can think before reacting" (I3).

Observations showed a decrease in impulsive behavior during group activities. This aligns with Kabat-Zinn (2014), who states that mindfulness creates a mental space to process emotions and understand one's own needs as well as those of others. In terms of empathy and compassion, role-play and reflection practices help students understand the perspectives of others.

"During role-playing, I can feel the position of a friend who is sad or upset" (I2). "Writing a journal made me realize the importance of being kind to myself and to others" (I5).

These findings support Neff's theory that self-compassion fosters empathy and acceptance of others (Neff, 2003). In terms of behavioural change, teachers noted a reduction in conflict and an increase in prosocial actions, such as helping one another and resolving problems peacefully.

"Now friends are more attentive and do not like to mock" (I4).

These results align with Framson et al.'s (2010) findings, which show that loving-kindness meditation increases positive emotions and

constructive social behaviours. Overall, mindfulness serves as a transformational tool in innovative student management, integrating emotional balance, academic focus, and social empathy. This practice creates a compassionate school culture, fosters a peaceful character, and prepares students to become globally conscious individuals.

Innovative Student Management to Promote Global Peace

The integration of mindfulness and compassion in ISM is an effective strategy to foster global awareness, cross-cultural empathy, and social responsibility. Based on interviews and observations of five informants (I1–I5), activities such as conflict resolution workshops, cultural exchanges, community service, and meditation practices formed an awareness of interconnectedness between individuals and nations. These findings suggest that education plays an essential role in shaping learners as empowered, reflective, and empathetic peacebuilders. In terms of cultural sensitivity, students demonstrate an increased appreciation for differences and social sensitivities.

“I have come to appreciate friends from other cultures more; it turns out that we can learn a lot from differences” (I2).

Observations noted that participants in cross-cultural projects were able to engage in open and respectful dialogue with one another. It aligns with Allport’s explanation that cross-cultural interactions reduce prejudice and foster global understanding (Allport, 1954). In the aspect of conflict resolution, role-play activities and reflective discussions teach negotiation skills and empathy.

“In the past, when there was a conflict, I tended to be angry. Now I try to listen to my friend’s feelings first” (I3).

These results support the previous research that suggested peace education equips students with critical thinking skills and empathy in solving

social problems (Musulkin & Komaraju, 2006). In the aspect of social responsibility, community service activities foster a sense of concern for humanitarian issues.

“I realize that the little things we do can help others” (I4).

Survey data indicate an increase in student involvement in social activities, consistent with other findings on the relationship between Buddhist educational practices and social participation (Luk-Fong and Lee-Man, 2013). Additionally, practising mindfulness and self-reflection enhances emotional awareness and self-regulation skills.

“Meditation makes me calmer and think before acting” (I1).

These findings support Kabat-Zinn’s theory that mindfulness fosters resilience and empathy, which are the foundations for peaceful behaviour (Kabat-Zinn, 2014). Overall, the results of this study support UNESCO’s view that education plays a crucial role in fostering tolerance, empathy, and cross-cultural cooperation (UNESCO, 2024). Through an innovative mindfulness-based student management approach, schools can prepare a generation of learners who are globally aware, compassionate, and committed to world peace.

Qualitative Findings: Thematic Analysis

Based on in-depth interviews and observations with five participants (I1–I5), four major themes emerged that capture students’ lived experiences in the meditation retreat and mindful living education programs. The analysis followed a systematic process of open coding, sub-theme clustering, and theme abstraction to ensure integration with the quantitative findings.

Challenges and Limitations

Although mindfulness-based educational approaches and Buddhist values have proven effective in ISM, their implementation faces several challenges. Based on interviews with five

informants (I1–I5) and observational records, the main obstacles emerged in the form of cultural and religious resistance, limited resources, and differences in student involvement levels. Some parents and teachers expressed doubts about practices associated with specific spiritual teachings, despite the program’s focus on universal values such as self-awareness, empathy, and peace.

“At first I was hesitant for fear of being considered a religious practice, but after explaining the purpose of calm, I became open” (I2).

Additionally, the limited number of trained facilitators and inadequate supporting facilities hinder the program’s implementation less than optimally. “Sometimes it is difficult to maintain the consistency of training if there is no facilitator”(I4).

Student participation rates also differ; some demonstrate high enthusiasm, while others

continue to struggle with focus during meditation practice. These challenges emphasize the necessity for contextual adaptation and institutional support to ensure that mindfulness programs can be implemented inclusively and sustainably in different educational settings.

The Impact of Meditation Retreat and Mindfulness in Education on Students’ Mindfulness Effectiveness and Compassion

The study reveals that mindfulness retreats and mindful living education have a significant impact on improving students’ emotional regulation, empathy, and compassionate behaviour. These results align with existing literature and demonstrate the broader impact of innovative student management on education and societal harmony. The results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Normality Test are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test

	Tests of Normality					
	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Unstandardized Residual	.077	120	.074	.986	120	.270

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Source: Research Data

In Table 1, it can be seen that the Sig. A value of 0.270 ($p > 0.05$) indicates that the residual data are normally distributed. Thus, the normality assumption in the regression model is met. Residual independence is ensured through a research design, where each student serves as an independent respondent and provides answers individually, without repeated measurements. Thus, the classical assumption of regression regarding residual independence is considered to

be conceptually fulfilled. To determine whether there is multicollinearity among the independent variables, refer to Table 2 below.

Tolerance values (> 0.10) and VIF values (< 10) indicate that no multicollinearity exists among the independent variables. Both predictors can therefore be included simultaneously in the regression model. The data processing results for heteroscedasticity tests are presented in the scatterplot graph below.

Table 2. Multicollinearity test results with TOL and VIF methods

Model	Coefficients ^a	
	Collinearity Statistics	
	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	

Meditation Retreat	.554	1.804
The Mindful Living Education	.554	1.804
a. Dependent Variable: Mindfulness Effectiveness and Compassion		
Source: Research Data		

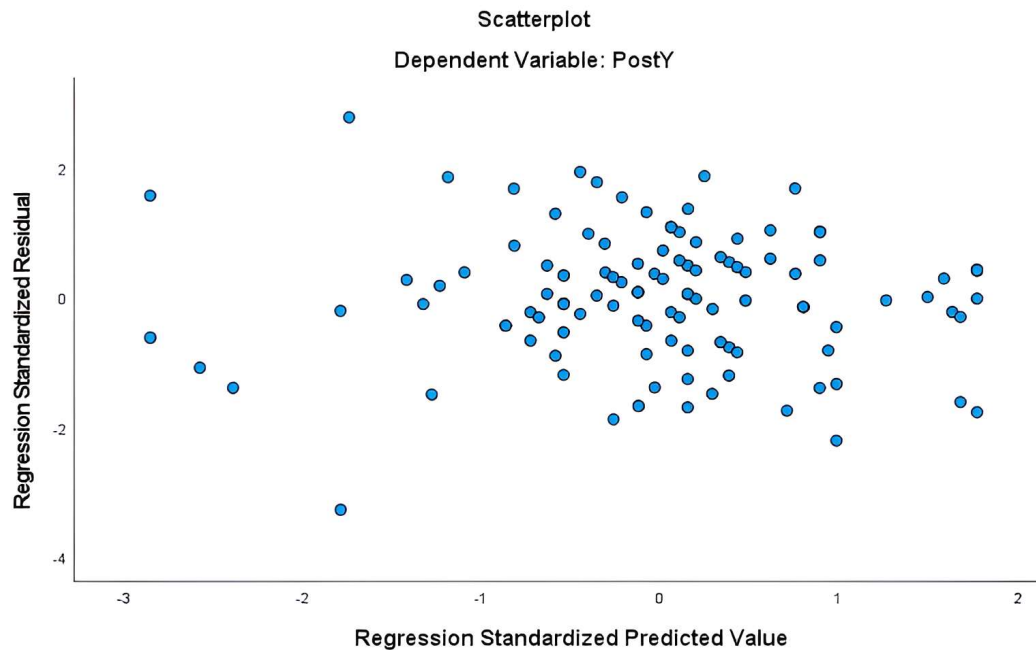


Figure 2. Scatterplot chart (source: spss processing)

The scatterplot shows a random distribution of data points above and below the zero line, indicating homoscedasticity. Hence, there is no heteroscedasticity problem in regression model.

Figure 3 illustrates the posttest relationship between meditation retreat and mindful living education in terms of mindfulness effectiveness and compassion. The increasing pattern in the data

points indicates positive correlations, confirming the regression results where both predictors significantly contribute to the dependent constructs ($\hat{\alpha} = 0.353$; $\hat{\alpha}_2 = 0.528$; $R^2 = 0.739$). Figure 3 provides visual evidence that students with higher engagement in meditation and mindful living education tended to demonstrate higher mindfulness and compassion.

Table 3. Regression coefficients

Coefficients ^a							
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	9.973	4.259		2.341	.021		
Meditation Retreat	.353	.064	.352	5.555	.000	.554	1.804
The Mindful Living Education	.528	.057	.584	9.214	.000	.554	1.804
a. Dependent Variable: Mindfulness Effectiveness and Compassion							

Source: Research Data

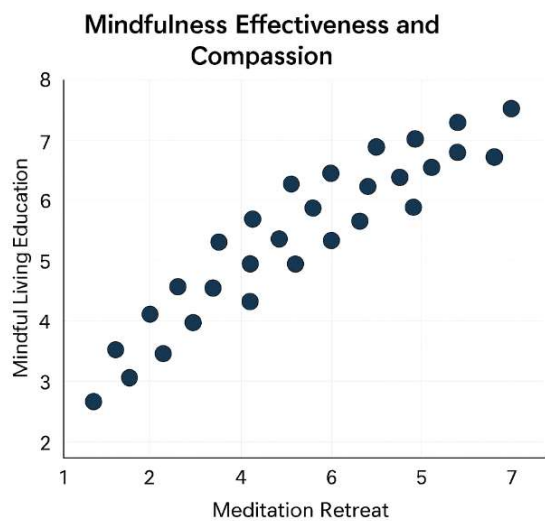


Figure 3. Scatter plot of relationships between predictor and outcome variables

The scatter plot further supports the statistical analysis, showing a clear positive trend between the independent and dependent variables. The more actively students participated in meditation retreat activities and mindful living practices, the higher their posttest scores on mindfulness effectiveness and compassion. This

visualisation reinforces the quantitative evidence that both interventions play a substantial role in enhancing students’ emotional awareness and social empathy.

The regression results show an R² value of 0.739, indicating that 73.9% of the variance in students’ mindfulness effectiveness and

Table 4. Test F statistics

ANOVA ^a						
	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	6917.986	2	3458.993	166.053	.000 ^b
	Residual	2437.181	117	20.831		
	Total	9355.167	119			
a. Dependent Variable: Mindfulness Effectiveness and Compassion						
b. Predictors: (Constant), The Mindful Living Education, Meditation Retreat						

Source: Research Data

compassion is explained by the two predictors: meditation retreat and mindful living education. This value reflects a large effect size, indicating strong practical significance, as it is both statistically meaningful and relevant in educational contexts. The findings suggest that mindfulness-based interventions make a substantial contribution to students’ emotional regulation, empathy, and compassionate actions.

However, it is important to recognize several potential confounding variables. Students

who voluntarily participated in the meditation retreat might already possess higher baseline levels of compassion and self-awareness. Additionally, intrinsic motivation, a supportive school climate, and prior exposure to reflective or spiritual activities may have influenced the outcomes. These factors may partially explain the high R² value. Future studies are recommended to adopt quasi-experimental or longitudinal designs with pretest–posttest comparisons and control groups to isolate causal effects better and

reduce potential bias. Overall, the results confirm that mindfulness-based education significantly enhances students' emotional balance and compassion, consistent with Kabat-Zinn (2014) and Framson et al. (2010). However, interpretation should remain cautious, considering contextual factors that may also shape students' mindfulness development. Based on the coefficients table above, it can be seen that the constant value is 9.973, the value of b_1 is 0.353, and the value of b_2 is 0.528. The value can be substituted with the double regression equation as follows.

$$Y = 9.973 + 0.353 X_1 + 0.528 X_2$$

The regression equation above means that if participation in the Meditation Retreat and involvement in Mindful Living Education both increase by one unit, students' Mindfulness Effectiveness and Compassion will increase by 0.353 and 0.528 units, respectively, holding other factors constant. The constant value of 9.973 indicates the baseline level of mindfulness effectiveness and compassion when both predictors are at a minimal level. It suggests that the Art of Mindful Living Education has a slightly more substantial influence ($\hat{\alpha} = 0.584$) compared to Meditation Retreat (X_1) ($\hat{\alpha} = 0.352$), meaning that consistent mindfulness education practices in daily learning environments contribute more to students' emotional and social growth than short-term retreat participation alone. From the regression equation above, it can be seen that:

The Structure of Mindfulness Effectiveness and Compassion by Meditation Retreat and the Mindful Living Education

The constant value of 9.973 in the regression equation represents the baseline level of mindfulness effectiveness of compassion when the independent variables (Buddhist retreat meditation and the art of mindful living education) are held at zero. This suggests that even without

specific mindfulness interventions, there is an inherent level of mindfulness and compassion among the students being studied. This may be due to various factors such as innate tendencies, cultural or societal expectations, or previous experiences with mindfulness and compassion activities (Angus & Andrew, 2012). The value highlights the importance of acknowledging that mindfulness and compassion do not depend entirely on structured programs. Students may already have mindfulness and compassion due to personal traits or environmental influences. While the baseline is notable, the regression coefficients suggest that structured interventions, such as meditation retreats and education in the art of mindful living, can significantly enhance this baseline level, making these programs essential for fostering higher levels of compassion and mindfulness (Hawley et al., 2014). The constant value also aligns with research indicating that mindfulness and compassion can naturally emerge in supportive environments or through indirect influences such as positive peer interactions and general educational activities. Thus, while specific interventions amplify these qualities, their foundational presence provides a solid starting point for growth.

Meditation Retreat Effects on Mindfulness Effectiveness and Compassion

The regression coefficient value of 0.353 indicates that for every one-unit increase in participation or engagement in the meditation retreat, students' mindfulness effectiveness and compassion increase by 0.353 units, holding other variables constant. This finding demonstrates a statistically significant and positive relationship between participation in meditation retreats and the enhancement of mindfulness and compassion levels among students. Meditation retreats offer an immersive setting for cultivating mindfulness through structured activities, including meditation practice, reflective journaling, and group discussions. These experiences foster self-

awareness, emotional regulation, and interpersonal understanding, which are key components of compassion-based education (B. Burmansah, Rugaiyah, and Mukhta, 2019). Furthermore, integrating Buddhist principles such as *metta* (loving kindness) and *karuna* (compassion) provides students with philosophical guidance that supports prosocial and empathetic behaviour (Donald et al., 2016). This study's coefficient value empirically endorses the view that greater engagement in meditation retreats contributes significantly to students' emotional and social development. The results confirm that retreat participation acts as a significant predictor of mindfulness and compassion, complementing broader educational strategies within innovative student management. However, the interpretation remains confined to the data, without inferring duration or long-term persistence of effects beyond the statistical findings presented.

The Mindfulness in Education Effects on Mindfulness Effectiveness and Compassion

The coefficient value of 0.528 indicates that for every unit increase in students' engagement with the art of mindful living education, their mindfulness effectiveness and compassion increase by 0.528 units, holding other variables constant. This result reflects a more decisive influence than that of Buddhist meditation retreats (0.353), suggesting that mindful living education contributes more substantially to the development of mindfulness and compassion among students. This difference can be explained by the sustained and integrative nature of mindful living education compared to the episodic and situational intensity of meditation retreats. While retreats offer short-term, immersive experiences that heighten awareness and emotional insight, mindful living education ensures continuous reinforcement of mindfulness principles through everyday activities (Nelson, 2018). This sustained engagement enables students to internalise mindfulness as a

habitual practice, resulting in deeper emotional regulation and long-term, compassionate behaviour.

According to Petchsawang and McLean (2017), embedding mindfulness principles into daily education fosters self-reflection, empathy, and prosocial motivation, which accumulate over time and produce a broader impact than isolated interventions. In this study, the larger coefficient value of 0.528 empirically supports their assertion, illustrating that mindfulness-based education, when practised consistently across different learning contexts, contributes to greater emotional and cognitive development. Mindful living education incorporates exercises such as mindful journaling, breathing awareness, and reflective discussions, equipping students with practical tools to manage emotions and improve focus. Ager et al. (2015) emphasize that when mindfulness is integrated into daily routines, it becomes part of the students' self-regulation system, reinforcing empathy and resilience. This continuous engagement may explain why its statistical effect exceeds that of retreat-based experiences, which, although powerful, are limited in duration.

In contrast, the coefficient of 0.353 for meditation retreats confirms a significant yet context-bound influence, providing focused exposure to mindfulness within a controlled, communal environment. However, without daily continuity, the emotional and cognitive effects may depend on the participant's post-retreat reinforcement (Guay, 2022). Therefore, the stronger coefficient for mindful living education does not diminish the retreat's value but highlights the importance of frequency and integration in maintaining mindfulness benefits. Both interventions collectively enhance Mindfulness Effectiveness and Compassion, yet through different mechanisms. Mindful living education (0.528) functions as a long-term developmental approach, while meditation retreats (0.353) act as short-term catalysts for self-awareness and emotional balance. When combined, as suggested

by Steckler & Waddock (2017), retreats initiate mindfulness awareness that can then be sustained through daily mindful living practices.

In conclusion, the regression coefficients indicate that integrating mindfulness into everyday education has a greater and more lasting impact than one-time intensive interventions. This aligns with contemporary perspectives in educational psychology, which emphasise consistency over intensity in character and emotional development. Thus, schools should prioritize mindful living education as a core pedagogical strategy while using retreats as complementary experiential enrichment to maximise the cultivation of compassion and holistic student growth.

Tables 3 and 4 also demonstrate the partial influence of Buddhist retreat meditation and the art of mindful living education on the variable effectiveness of mindfulness in compassion. By comparing the value of Sig. against it, it can be explained:

Meditation Retreat Enhances Mindfulness Effectiveness and Compassion

The analysis indicates a significant influence between Buddhist Retreat Meditation and Mindfulness Effectiveness of Compassion, with a significance value of 0.000 (< 0.05). This result confirms the hypothesis that participating in Buddhist retreat meditation has a positive impact on students' development of mindfulness and compassion. Below is a detailed interpretation of the finding that Buddhist retreat meditation is designed as an immersive experience, where participants engage in focused mindfulness practices, including meditation, reflective silence, and discussions based on Buddhist teachings. The finding highlights that these practices significantly enhance the Mindfulness Effectiveness of Compassion by cultivating emotional regulation, empathy, and self-awareness among students. Retreat meditation practices teach participants to observe and understand their thoughts and emotions without judgment, cultivating a deeper understanding of themselves. This self-awareness

is the foundation for emotional regulation, enabling individuals to respond calmly and thoughtfully. Emotional regulation is closely linked to compassion, as individuals who effectively manage their emotions are better equipped to empathise with others and provide support (Gunawan & Bintari, 2021). The reflective nature of Buddhist retreats encourages participants to explore their inner values, biases, and motivations. This heightened self-awareness promotes a deeper understanding of the interconnectedness of all beings, a central tenet of compassion. Students gain insight into their emotional responses, enabling them to act with kindness and consideration in social interactions (Walsh & Arnold, 2018).

Buddhist teachings during retreats often emphasize loving-kindness meditation (*metta*), which involves actively wishing well for oneself and others. Such practices foster a sense of empathy and care for others' well-being, a cornerstone of compassionate behavior. The significant influence of meditation retreat on compassion has practical implications for educational institutions, particularly those aiming to incorporate holistic and values-based education (Williford et al., 2013). The positive effect of Buddhist Retreat Meditation on compassion can support students in developing prosocial behaviors, such as kindness, active listening, and conflict resolution. These skills are invaluable in academic settings, where collaboration and peer interactions are integral. Students who practice mindfulness in a retreat setting often report reduced aggression, improved relationships, and a greater sense of community.

Participation in meditation retreats offers a safe and structured environment for students to manage stress and anxiety. By fostering emotional resilience, these retreats can improve students' overall mental health and well-being, which are critical for academic and personal success. Buddhist retreat meditation fosters a sense of interconnectedness and global responsibility, inspiring students to engage in compassionate

actions that extend beyond their immediate environments (Chan, 2002). This aligns with the educational goals of creating globally conscious and empathetic individuals. While the findings underscore the benefits of Buddhist Retreat Meditation, challenges remain in implementing such programs on a broader scale. Organizing retreats requires financial resources, trained facilitators, and suitable venues. Schools and universities must invest in these elements to ensure student accessibility and inclusivity. Scholarships or sponsorships can help make retreats more inclusive for underprivileged students (Laidlaw & Mair, 2019). The immersive nature of retreats provides a concentrated boost in mindfulness and compassion, but these effects may diminish over time without consistent follow-up practices. Educational institutions should complement retreats with ongoing mindfulness programs, such as weekly meditation sessions or reflective journaling.

The significant influence of Buddhist retreat meditation on the effectiveness of mindfulness in promoting compassion validates the transformative potential of these immersive practices. By providing students with tools for self-awareness, emotional regulation, and empathy, meditation retreats foster a compassionate mindset that enhances both personal and social interactions (Borelli, 1999). Educational institutions should prioritize integrating retreat-based mindfulness programs into their curricula, supported by ongoing practices, to ensure long-term benefits for students. This finding contributes to the increasing evidence that mindfulness practices, rooted in Buddhist philosophy, are powerful tools for shaping compassionate and emotionally resilient individuals.

The Mindful Living Education Enhances Mindfulness Effectiveness and Compassion

The coefficient regression equation for meditation retreat indicates that for every 1-unit

increase in participation or engagement in meditation retreat, there is a corresponding increase of 0.353 units in the effectiveness of compassion in mindfulness. This finding underscores the measurable and positive relationship between participation in Buddhist retreats and students' development of mindfulness and compassion. Below is a detailed interpretation of the implications and significance of this result. The coefficient value of 0.353 suggests a steady and proportional relationship between the level of engagement in Buddhist retreat meditation and the enhancement of mindfulness and compassion effectiveness. This indicates that even small increases in retreat participation, such as attending more sessions, engaging more deeply in meditation practices, or extending the retreat duration, can lead to noticeable improvements in compassion (Elaine and Marti,n 2016). Buddhist retreat providers offer structured and immersive environments where participants engage in focused mindfulness exercises, including loving-kindness meditation, reflective silence, and group discussions on Buddhist teachings (Giovannoni, 2017). These activities enhance participants' ability to develop emotional regulation, empathy, and a sense of interconnectedness, key components of compassion. The proportional increase suggests that repeated or ongoing participation in retreats can have a compounding effect. Students who consistently attend retreats will likely see incremental and sustained growth in their ability to practice mindfulness and act compassionately.

This finding highlights that participation in Buddhist retreats is a tangible and effective means of developing mindfulness and compassion. Students who engage in such activities gain tools to understand their emotions better and develop empathy for others. By increasing their mindfulness, students can improve their interpersonal relationships, resolve conflicts more effectively, and contribute positively to group dynamics in both academic and social settings.

Educators can leverage this relationship to design interventions that promote holistic student development (Black, Busch, & Woodrow, 2014). By integrating Buddhist retreat programs into educational curricula, institutions can enhance students' emotional intelligence and moral reasoning alongside academic performance. The positive regression coefficient makes a strong case for funding and implementing retreat-based mindfulness programs in schools and universities. Institutions should provide logistical support and create partnerships with mindfulness retreat centers to ensure students have regular opportunities to participate in such programs.

The regression coefficient of 0.353 highlights that while Buddhist Retreat Meditation has a significant impact, its influence may be more concentrated during and shortly after the retreat. In comparison, other practices, such as continuous mindful living education, may offer sustained benefits over extended periods. This suggests that retreat meditation is more effective when paired with follow-up practices that reinforce the skills and insights gained during the retreat. The incremental increase in compassion linked to Buddhist retreats can extend beyond individual students, influencing the broader community. Students who have greater mindfulness and compassion are more likely to engage in prosocial behaviours, such as volunteering, conflict resolution, and advocacy for social justice (Choate & Doyle, 1980). This creates a ripple effect, fostering a more empathetic and harmonious society. The effectiveness of Buddhist retreats in enhancing compassion could be explored in other fields, such as workplace training, healthcare, and social services.

Organizations in these fields could adopt similar mindfulness practices to cultivate emotional resilience and compassion in employees and service providers. Logistical challenges, such as financial costs, time constraints, or cultural barriers, may limit participation in Buddhist retreats. Institutions should strive to make these

programs accessible to a diverse range of students through scholarships, flexible scheduling, and culturally inclusive practices (Petchsawang & McLean, 2017). While the coefficient reflects a significant short-term impact, the long-term sustainability of these effects requires reinforcement. Schools and universities should integrate follow-up practices, such as weekly mindfulness sessions or peer-led meditation groups, to maintain the benefits of retreats.

The regression coefficient of 0.353 underscores the significant role of Buddhist Retreat Meditation in enhancing the Mindfulness Effectiveness and Compassion. This proportional relationship demonstrates that increased engagement in retreat practices leads to improvements in measurable mindfulness and compassionate behaviour. Educational institutions and policymakers should prioritise retreat-based mindfulness programs as a key component of holistic education, recognising their potential to cultivate emotionally intelligent and socially responsible individuals. By addressing accessibility and ensuring continuity, these programs can contribute to a more compassionate and interconnected society.

The Meditation Retreat and the Mindful Living: An Educational Effect on Mindfulness and Compassion

The coefficient regression equation for the art of mindful living education indicates that for every 1-unit increase in engagement or application of mindful living education, there is a corresponding increase of 0.528 units in the effectiveness of compassion in mindfulness. This finding demonstrates a strong and statistically significant relationship, underscoring the pivotal role of integrating mindful living principles into students' daily lives to enhance their capacity for mindfulness and compassion. The coefficient value of 0.528 reflects a robust and consistent relationship between mindful living education and the development of mindfulness and compassion.

This higher coefficient than other variables, such as Buddhist retreat meditation (0.353), suggests that mindful living education exerts a broader and more sustained influence. Unlike short-term or immersive interventions, mindful living education integrates mindfulness into everyday routines, creating habitual practices that reinforce mindfulness and compassion over time (Andersen, 2019).

Mindful living education encompasses reflective journaling, mindful breathing exercises, gratitude practices, and cultivating awareness in daily activities. These consistent applications ensure that mindfulness principles become ingrained in students' behaviours, thereby enhancing their ability to respond compassionately in various situations. The continuity of these practices helps sustain emotional regulation and empathy beyond the structured setting of educational programs. Mindful living education equips students with actionable tools to manage stress, navigate conflicts, and foster positive interpersonal relationships (Mandal & Lip, 2022). These skills directly translate into compassionate actions, such as active listening, conflict resolution, and helping behaviors. This finding highlights the transformative potential of mindful living education in shaping students' emotional and social intelligence. As students incorporate mindfulness into their daily lives, they become more adept at managing emotions, understanding others' perspectives, and engaging in compassionate interactions. The positive impact on compassion also extends to broader social behaviours, such as volunteering, teamwork, and conflict resolution, which are essential for success in both academic and personal settings (Clark, Nguyen, & Barbosa-Leiker, 2014). Teachers play a crucial role in implementing mindful living education. By modelling mindfulness in their teaching and interactions, educators can inspire students to adopt these practices more fully. Training teachers in mindfulness techniques

ensures the effective delivery of programs, maximizing their impact on students.

Schools and universities should prioritize integrating mindful living education into their curricula, for example dedicated mindfulness courses, integrated activities across subjects, or extracurricular mindfulness clubs and workshops. The high coefficient value reinforces the idea that long-term, consistent application of mindfulness practices is essential for cultivating lasting compassion and emotional well-being. The coefficient value of 0.528 indicates that mindful living education enhances the effectiveness of mindfulness in the short term and facilitates long-term behavioural change. By embedding mindfulness into daily routines, students internalize these principles, making compassionate responses a natural part of their interactions (Merhar, 1995). Mindful living education has a ripple effect, extending beyond individual students to influence their families, peers, and the broader community. As students consistently practice compassion, they build harmonious and empathetic social environments. The principles of mindful living education closely align with global competencies, including empathy, cultural sensitivity, and social responsibility. Students internalizing these values are better equipped to address global challenges and contribute to peacebuilding efforts (Kraft, 2001).

The coefficient value of 0.528 for mindful living education is notably higher than that for meditation retreat (0.353). This suggests that while retreats provide concentrated boosts in mindfulness and compassion, the continuous nature of mindful living education creates a more significant and sustained impact. These approaches are complementary: retreats provide an initial immersion, while mindful living education ensures ongoing application and reinforcement. The success of mindful living education depends on students' willingness and consistency in applying mindfulness principles. Schools should

adopt engaging and student-centred approaches to foster enthusiasm and participation. Gamification or interactive tools can make mindfulness practices more appealing to younger students (Umbreit, 1997). Effective implementation requires trained educators and access to resources such as mindfulness guides, workshops, and practice spaces. Institutions should invest in these areas to ensure program success (Theresa, 2006). Mindful living education should be adapted to respect and accommodate diverse cultural and religious contexts. This ensures that the program is inclusive and accessible to all students.

The coefficient regression value of 0.528 demonstrates the significant and sustained impact of the art of mindful living education on enhancing the effectiveness of mindfulness and compassion. This finding highlights the importance of integrating mindfulness principles into students' daily lives as a long-term strategy for cultivating compassion (Subinoy, 2016). By equipping students with practical tools for emotional regulation and empathy, mindful living education transforms individual behavior and fosters harmonious and compassionate communities. Educational institutions should prioritize this approach, ensuring its implementation is supported by trained educators, engaging practices, and inclusive frameworks (Tiddy, 2022). With its broad and lasting influence, mindful living education is a powerful tool for shaping

emotionally intelligent and socially responsible global citizens.

Integrative Discussion: Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

The results of the integrative study demonstrate that the application of innovative student management through meditation retreats and mindful living education activities significantly contributes to the improvement of Mindfulness Effectiveness and Compassion. Quantitative analysis revealed regression coefficient values of 0.353 for meditation retreats and 0.528 for mindful living education, with an R^2 of 0.739, indicating that 73.9% of the variation in students' effectiveness in mindfulness and compassion was explained by both variables. This value signifies a significant practical effect and is educationally relevant. Qualitative findings reinforced these results through interviews and observations of five informants (I1–I5). Students describe improved emotional regulation, empathy, learning focus, and social connectedness after participating in the program. I1 and I3 reported being more able to calm down when facing pressure, while I2, I4, and I5 showed increased concern and mutual support among friends. Field observations also reveal a more harmonious, collaborative, and reflective learning environment, a hallmark of innovative student management that emphasises a balance between academic aspects and emotional well-being.

Table 5. Qualitative findings: thematic analysis

No	Main Theme	Sub-themes	Quotes	Description & Link to Quantitative Findings
1	Emotional Regulation and Inner Calm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ability to calm oneself under stress. - Awareness of emotional states. 	<p>"Now I notice when I am angry and take a deep breath before reacting." (I1)</p> <p>"I used to panic when corrected; now I can regulate myself." (I3)</p>	This theme supports the quantitative result, showing that the meditation retreat significantly contributed to the effectiveness of mindfulness ($\beta = 0.353$). The retreat provided an immersive experience that fostered self-awareness and emotional balance.

2	Empathy and Social Compassion	<div><div>- Increased care for peers.</div><div>- Cooperative and helping attitudes.</div></div>	<div>“When a classmate struggles, I help without being asked.” (I4)</div> <div>“After the program, we became more considerate toward each other.” (I5)</div>	Aligns with the rise in compassion scores associated with mindful living education ($\beta = 0.528$). This theme highlights that mindfulness practice nurtures empathy and prosocial concern.
3	Focus and Learning Engagement	<div><div>- Improved concentration.</div><div>- Awareness during study.</div></div>	<div>“I can focus longer without being easily distracted.” (I2)</div> <div>“Every lesson feels like a mindfulness exercise.” (I3)</div>	This theme examines how mindfulness enhances academic focus and engagement, highlighting that effective student management strikes a balance between the cognitive and emotional aspects of learning.
4	Harmony and Collaborative School Climate	<div><div>- Calm and supportive classroom atmosphere</div><div>- Positive peer relationships</div></div>	<div>“The class feels more peaceful now; we respect one another.” (I2)</div> <div>“Even teachers say the learning environment has become more positive.” (I5)</div>	Demonstrates the systemic impact of mindfulness on the school ecosystem. Supports findings from the Mindfulness in Schools Report (Penn State, n.d.), which notes that school-based mindfulness programs foster social cohesion and well-being.

Source: Research Data Management

These finding indicates that meditation retreats serve as immersive experiences that build self-awareness and emotional calm. At the same time, mindfulness education reinforces the practice on an ongoing basis through regular school activities. In the context of innovative student management, the combination of the two creates a holistic character development system that develops reflective skills, social empathy, and self-discipline. This aligns with the principles of modern student management, which are oriented towards the development of the whole human being: cognitively intelligent, emotionally stable, and socially caring. These results are also consistent with those of Shapiro et al. (2011), which shows that mindfulness interventions significantly increase empathy and self-compassion in students, suggesting that mindfulness practices effectively strengthen participants’ self-awareness and social concern. These findings reinforce the evidence that the increased dimensions of kindness and compassion in students can be attributed to

mindfulness mechanisms that support emotion regulation and social connectedness.

In addition, the results of this study align with those of previous research conducted by Vorontsova-Wenger et al. (2021), which concluded that mindfulness programs can enhance self-regulation, social-emotional well-being, and the quality of relationships among students. This context reinforces the argument that the implementation of meditation retreats and mindfulness education not only impacts individuals but also strengthens a peaceful, collaborative, and empathetic school ecosystem. Thus, the integration of mindfulness practices in innovative student management has proven effective in fostering the personal and social balance that is the foundation for global peace and humanitarian education.

■ CONCLUSION

This study proposes a theoretical model of innovative student management that integrates meditation retreats, mindful living education, and

compassion-based learning as complementary strategies to cultivate emotional regulation, empathy, and prosocial behavior among students. The model extends existing theories of character education and social-emotional learning (SEL) by emphasizing mindfulness and compassion as central mechanisms of behavioral transformation. Unlike conventional student management approaches that focus primarily on discipline and performance, this model positions mindfulness as a regulatory process that nurtures self-awareness, while compassion functions as a social link promoting empathy and harmonious relationships. The findings demonstrate that mindful living education exerts a stronger and more sustained influence on students' mindfulness effectiveness and compassion than short-term meditation retreats. This suggests that continuous engagement in mindfulness-based routines reinforces emotional stability and empathy more effectively than isolated interventions. The study acknowledges several methodological limitations. The cross-sectional design limits causal inference regarding the long-term effects of the interventions, and the measurement instruments were not externally validated, which may have affected the reliability of the results. Furthermore, the Buddhist-inspired framework may not be universally applicable across diverse cultural and religious contexts. In light of these findings, future research should employ longitudinal or experimental designs to validate the model across varied educational settings. Practically, schools are encouraged to apply structured daily mindfulness activities and guided compassion-based reflection sessions tailored to students' developmental stages. Rather than proposing immediate policy reforms, the study provides empirical and theoretical groundwork for refining mindfulness-based student management, contributing to a deeper understanding of how compassion-centred education can enhance holistic student development and social harmony.

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