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Scientific articles

Mindfulness en la educación: Una revisión sistemática

Mindfulness in education: A systematic review

Mindfulness na educação: uma revisão sistemática

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Resumen

La técnica mindfulness propicia el desarrollo integral, fortalece el aprendizaje, mejora la autoestima e incrementa logros de aprendizaje; a la vez, reduce conductas depresivas y de agresividad en estudiantes. El objetivo de este estudio, fue analizar diversas investigaciones realizadas respecto a la influencia de la técnica mindfulness en el campo educativo. La metodología empleada fue la revisión sistemática de nivel descriptivo; para ello se recurrió a diversas bases de datos de investigación científica como: Scopus, Ebsco, SciELO, Science Direct y Redalyc.org. Además, se consideró el método prisma utilizado para descartar artículos de menor interés. Los artículos considerados finalmente para nuestro estudio fueron 13 de 120. Como conclusión se obtuvo que el aplicar programas relacionados a mindfulness mejora significativamente el aprendizaje, reduce el estrés, la ansiedad en los estudiantes, generando así, un ambiente de enseñanza-aprendizaje más efectivo que conduce a una educación de calidad.

Palabras clave: Docente; estudiante; educación; mindfulness.



Abstract

The mindfulness technique promotes comprehensive development, strengthens learning, improves self-esteem and increases learning achievements; At the same time, it reduces depressive and aggressive behaviors in students. The objective of this study was to analyze various research carried out regarding the influence of the mindfulness technique in the educational field. The methodology used was the systematic review at a descriptive level; For this purpose, various scientific research databases were used such as: Scopus, Ebsco, SciELO, Science Direct and Redalyc.org. Additionally, the prism method used to discard articles of lesser interest was considered. The articles finally considered for our study were 13 out of 120. In conclusion, it was obtained that applying programs related to mindfulness significantly improves learning, reduces stress and anxiety in students, thus generating a more effective teaching-learning environment than leads to quality education.

Keywords: Teacher; student; education; mindfulness.

Resumo

A técnica mindfulness promove o desenvolvimento integral, fortalece o aprendizado, melhora a autoestima e aumenta as conquistas de aprendizagem; Ao mesmo tempo, reduz comportamentos depressivos e agressivos nos alunos. O objetivo deste estudo foi analisar diversas pesquisas realizadas sobre a influência da técnica de mindfulness no campo educacional. A metodologia utilizada foi a revisão sistemática em nível descritivo; Para tanto, foram utilizadas diversas bases de dados de pesquisa científica como: Scopus, Ebsco, SciELO, Science Direct e Redalyc.org. Adicionalmente, foi considerado o método do prisma utilizado para descartar artigos de menor interesse. Os artigos finalmente considerados para o nosso estudo foram 13 de 120. Concluindo, obteve-se que a aplicação de programas relacionados à atenção plena melhora significativamente a aprendizagem, reduz o estresse e a ansiedade nos alunos, gerando assim um ambiente de ensino-aprendizagem mais eficaz do que leva a uma educação de qualidade.

Palavras-chave: Professor; estudante; educação; atenção plena.

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Introduction

In recent years, the educational field has experienced the urgent need to modernize pedagogical approaches and strategies to ensure the success of the students' learning process. This demand became even more evident in 2020, when education moved to a virtual environment. This showed that the educational systems of developing countries were not prepared to face this type of modality, plunging into a digital crisis that generated pedagogical imbalances for many teachers. This reality forced educators to adapt to the digital challenges of contemporary society. In this context, Morín (1999) underlines the importance of all educational institutions being prepared to address the new realities related to pandemics, armed conflicts and climate change.

Given the above, it is essential that educational institutions adapt and modify their curriculum according to the context and specific challenges faced by students. In this context, Velásquez (2007) highlights the importance of any adjustment to the curriculum being sensitive to the diverse environments in which the actors of the educational process participate. Therefore, educators are expected to have the capacity and, above all, the willingness to innovate in methods and techniques for the benefit of students, in order to develop their competencies, encourage autonomous learning, strengthen emotional skills, promote mental health and cultivate values. According to Martínez *et al.* (2018), this approach is most clearly evident in more flexible educational environments, where teachers are willing to implement new strategies that positively affect motivation and, ultimately, academic performance.

With this purpose and motivated by the desire to explore teaching-learning methods that contribute to improving academic performance, managing emotions and minimizing the level of stress in students, a study was carried out focused on the review of research linked to the practice of Mindfulness. This technique, associated with meditation, requires, according to Walsh (1996), attention training with the aim of expanding awareness and managing mental processes.

The precursor of this technique, Kabat-Zinn (2007), argues that Mindfulness involves paying special attention to actions in the present moment, especially without making judgments. According to him, it constitutes the art of living consciously. Although the translation into Spanish of Mindfulness is "full consciousness" or "full attention", Simón (2011) suggests that it is more appropriate to use the word Mindfulness, since it covers a more complete meaning. According to Simón, Mindfulness refers to the ability to be aware in the now. In

addition, he points out that on many occasions we experience this in our daily lives, but we do not realize it, and this occurs when one is aware of what one does, thinks or feels.

This technique experienced remarkable growth in the nineties and has seen an even more significant increase today. Mindfulness is widely used in the health field, especially in psychology, as it focuses on addressing emotional states. According to Bishop *et al.* (2004), the practice of Mindfulness contributes to reducing emotional distress and maladaptive behaviors. Furthermore, Esgueva (2016) argues that the application of this technique is a beneficial option, as it allows one to experience a feeling of inner calm and tranquility, with the aim of avoiding feeling overwhelmed by the existence of numerous judgments and opinions that often tend to dominate us.

It is important to note that Mindfulness is not restricted exclusively to the field of psychology or psychotherapy; in fact, it has gained considerable prominence in educational research, becoming increasingly a powerful tool in that context (Simón, 2011).

The application of this tool has made it possible to understand the psychological and emotional aspects not only of students, but also of teachers. In this sense, Águila (2020) points out that for teachers, its use leads to improvements in personal well-being and resilience, while reducing levels of anxiety, stress, depression and exhaustion, in addition to decreasing the number of days of absence from work due to illness. As for students, comprehensive growth is promoted, a positive perception of themselves and their self-esteem is reinforced, motivation to learn is stimulated, which improves academic performance; a reduction in aggression, violence and disciplinary problems is also observed.

In this context, Secanell and Núñez (2019) argue that inattention, hyperactivity and impulse are notable characteristics in these challenges, along with low tolerance to frustration, irritability and mood variability that can affect teachers. This shows that this technique is not only intended for students, but is also applicable to support educators in managing the various psychological situations they face daily in classrooms. Brito-Pastrana and Corthorn (2018) underline the importance of an effective intervention approach that begins with the integration of mindfulness practice among teachers, allowing them to then promote its application among their students.

For this reason, Fernández-Sarabia (2019) mentions that there are many teaching centers that are beginning to use strategies that help improve social skills and emotional intelligence. It should be noted that the use of the Mindfulness technique, according to studies carried out, becomes a very valuable tool to treat emotional states.

According to López *et al.* (2021), instruction in the mindfulness technique is beneficial for students, positively impacting their psychological, cognitive and emotional aspects.

Kabat developed a Mindfulness program, the purpose of which was to reduce stress. In it, he proposed meditative practices in the present moment to his patients; he did this with the aim of reducing symptoms (Mercader, 2020).

Arguis *et al.*, (2012) states that mindfulness lies in maintaining, as far as possible, a conscious and calm lifestyle, since it will help us to live fully in the moment.

The practice of mindfulness meditation has been found to benefit well-being by improving emotional regulation, strengthening attention control, and reducing psychological stress in individuals participating in a mindfulness-based stress reduction program.

Most of the Mindfulness technique has been directed to reduce stress or depression in the psychological field; however, according to certain research this technique is also being taken to other fields, and one of them is the educational one. So far, it is estimated that there are at least 30 different Mindfulness programs for children Albrecht (2015). Likewise, Herrero *et al.* (2019) mentions that the programs based on this technique (MBIE: Mindfulness- Based Interventions in Education) are having a great relevance in the educational field, contributing to the integral development of the personality of the students who require the intervention of the technique, Felver *et al.*, (2016). Thus, concern has arisen in educational centers to begin to give greater consideration to aspects such as social skills, intelligence or skills related to emotions (Fernández-Sarabia, 2019).

With the above, the importance that the technique has gained in the educational field is underlined again. According to Águila (2020), mindfulness in education is presented as a concept developed through the combination of science and spirituality, balancing rigor with the "art of awakening." In this approach, the challenge lies not only in teaching, but rather in learning.

Thus, Kaufman (2021), who based himself on the theory of transformative education, states that the integration of the Mindfulness technique in education can sow interdependence and privilege, giving rise to an increase in critical awareness. Another research carried out on this technique is that of Mercader (2020), who mentions the influence that this technique has on the academic performance of high school students. The pertinent and adequate application of the mindfulness technique helps improve the stability of emotions. Nowadays, its use has become very relevant; not only in the health field but also in education. Given this situation, the question arises: What benefits and effects are achieved from the application of programs

based on the mindfulness technique within the educational field, both in teachers and students?

In order to find out what research exists on the subject under study, the objective was to describe how significant and effective the intervention of the mindfulness-based technique is in an educational context. This was done through a thorough systematic review of scientific articles, which allows us to build new knowledge that is structured and, above all, current.

Ultimately, it is important for teachers to implement various teaching strategies and methods for the well-being of students, both academically and emotionally. In addition, it is important to always keep in mind that teachers are also important entities and for this reason, the Ministry must also be concerned about their mental health, since this way they will do a better job with their students by applying the Mindfulness technique.

Method

To carry out this research, a methodology was used that consisted of a systematic review at a descriptive level, following the PRISMA method (Urrutia and Bonfill , 2011), using reliable data and conducting a documentary and content research analysis. The purpose of this review was to evaluate the feasibility of applying the mindfulness technique to improve students' academic performance.

Search strategies

During the information search process in various investigations, databases such as Scopus, Ebsco , ProQuest, SciELO and Redalyc.org were accessed. The choice of these databases was based on their wide dissemination of scientific articles and their recognized quality, as highlighted by Aghaei et al. (2013). In addition, specific keywords will be considered, such as "mindfulness in education", "mindfulness" and "learning". The information search was carried out individually for each key term, thus facilitating the obtaining of the necessary information.

Inclusion and exclusion criteria

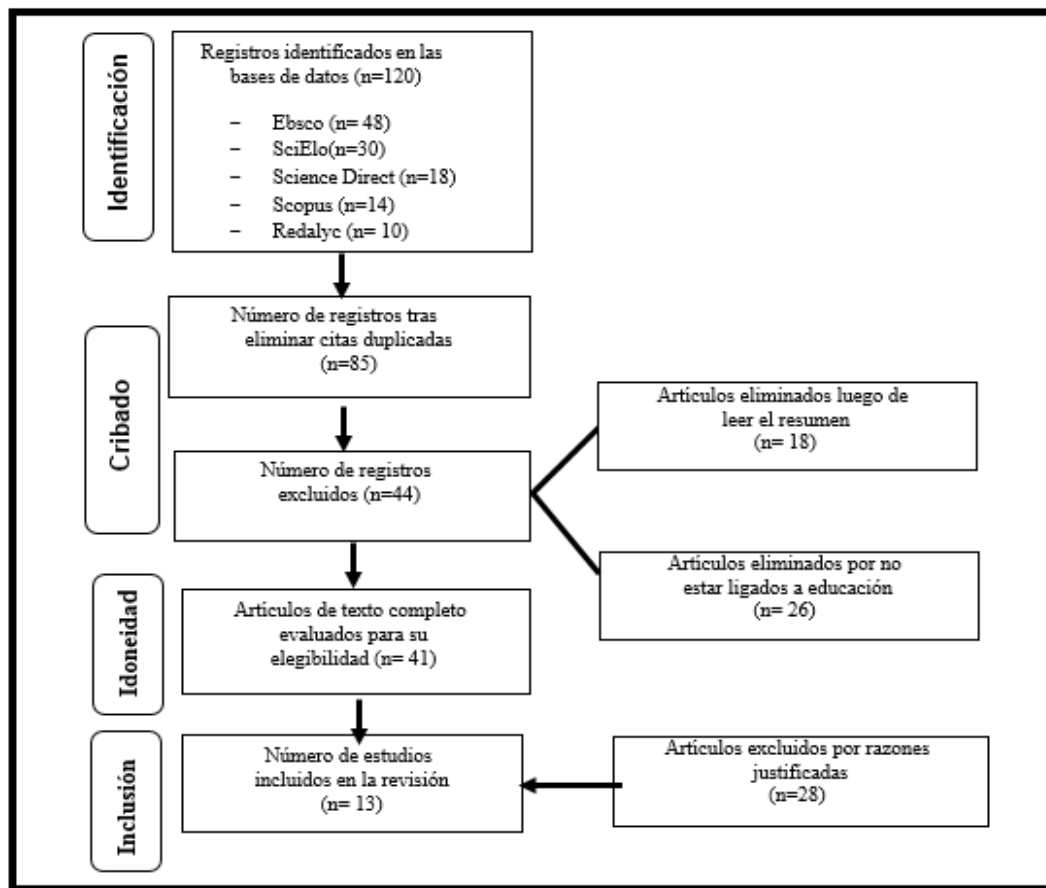
This study took into account criteria such as:

- Articles published in English and/or Spanish.
- Studies published between 2017 and 2023.
- Studies that have included mindfulness programs to improve learning in students.

The exclusion criteria included duplication, years not included in the aforementioned dates, studies related to journals that are not linked to the area of education such as: engineering,

medicine, economics, mathematics, etc. For this reason, those that did not comply were discarded and 13 articles were selected for the study. The following prism flow diagram was used for analysis.

Figure 1. Prism flowchart of systematic search results



Source: Own elaboration.

Based on the filters that were made, according to relevance, only 13 articles related to the topic were analyzed. To do so, the Boolean operators: “benefits of mindfulness in teachers and benefits of mindfulness in students” were used, always keeping in mind the question posed in this systematic review.

Results

The following table shows the descriptions of the articles that were chosen to be studied according to the inclusion criteria. As an example, the number of articles mentioned is not large; however, it contributes greatly to the objective and proposed study. For the analysis of this study, the following elements were considered: author(s), year of publication, database, country/language, journal in which it was published, name or title of the publication, description.

Table 1. Key characteristics of the review study

N o.	Author(s), year	Databas e	Magazine	Country/L anguage	Title of the publication	Description
1	(Olaya <i>et al.</i> , 2023)	Scopus	Education and educators	Colombia / Spanish	Mindfulness to improve the sensitivity of early childhood education teachers	Following the program intervention , teachers showed very significant sensitivity, suggesting a considerable improvement in their ability to recognize, interpret and effectively address children's needs.
2	(Bellver-Perez and Menescardi , 2022)	Scopus	Challenges	Spain/ Spanish	Importance of applying relaxation techniques in the physical education classroom	The intervention demonstrated significant improvements in students' behavior, as well as in their psychophysical and behavioral well-being, aspects that directly impact the classroom environment and academic performance.
3	(Buccolo and Ferro, 2022)	Ebsco	Training & Instruction	Italy/Engli sh	Mindfulness Based Education for Emotional Awareness and Prevent Burn-out Syndrome: An Educational Experience with Teachers from Kindergarten to High School	The application of the program had positive effects on educators, regarding its pedagogical implications, their professional and personal context, since they understood its usefulness and the importance of its experiential nature.
4	(Suryanto and Nugraha , 2022)	Ebsco	Journal of innovation and community participation	Indonesia/ English	Mindfulness Community Education for High School Students and Guidance	The application of the mindfulness technique reveals the importance of increasing resilience to stress in adolescents, which will lead to an improvement in the quality of learning. It was

					and Counseling Teachers	shown that resilience decreases with age.
5	(Serrano <i>et al.</i> , 2022)	Ebsco	Frontiers in Education	Portugal/ English	The effects of a mindfulness -based program on higher education students	Mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs) can serve as a useful tool to help students cope with these demands: stress, anxiety, and depression.
N o.	Author(s), year	Databas e	Magazine	Country/L anguage	Title of the publication	Description
6	(González -Cortez and Lagos, 2022)	SciEL O	Educare	Chile/ Spanish	Effectivenes s of a mindfulness -based intervention program to self-regulate attention in primary school children	After applying the program, its effectiveness in improving the child's self-regulation of attention is demonstrated. This supports the effectiveness of this tool that is offered to the educational system as an efficient program.
7	(Constanti ne and Sword, 2021)	Scopus	Challenges	Spain/ Spanish	Analysis of the developmen t channels and emotional intelligence through the intervention of a teaching unit of Mindfulness and Biodanza in Physical Education for	The application of mindfulness benefits the growth of emotional intelligence, which encompasses: emotional attention and clarity and emotional repair, as well as in the areas of cognitive and emotional development, in students aged 11 to 14.

No.	Author(s), year	Database	Magazine	Country/Language	Title of the publication	Description
8	(Benavides and Benavides, 2021)	SciELO	Horizons	Peru/Spanish	secondary school The application of Mindfulness to improve teaching and learning strategies in higher education.	The technique promotes students' comprehensive development, self-concept and self-esteem and increases cognitive performance and academic results .
9	Baena et al., (2021)	Science Direct	Psychodidactics	Spain, Spanish	Improving attention and stress levels in students through a Mindfulness intervention program	The implementation of a Mindfulness program produces improvements in attention capacity and decreases stress levels in these students, with variations depending on gender, educational institution and age.
10	(Dark et al., 2020)	Science Direct	Journal of Psychodidactics	Spain/English	Promoting school success through mindfulness-based interventions in early childhood.	Applying the mindfulness technique will improve school adaptation and school behavior problems that often occur in this environment, and at the same time, there will be improvements in school results.

11	(Mercader, 2020)	SciELO	Purposes and representations	Peru/Spanish	Problems in adolescents, mindfulness and academic performance in high school students. Preliminary study.	No significant links were found between adolescents' problems (self-esteem and depression) and their academic performance, although connections were identified between grades.
12	(Acorn <i>et al.</i> , (2017)	Science Direct	Mindfulness & Compassion	Spain/Spanish	Pilot study of the influence of a mindfulness and self-compassion-based intervention on verbal and figurative creativity in university students.	The results show notable improvements in the levels of mindfulness and self-compassion, as well as in the verbal and figurative creativity of the students in the experimental group.
No.	Author(s), year	Database	Magazine	Country/Language	Title of the publication	Description
13	(Cuevas <i>et al.</i> , (2017)	REDA LYC	Universities Psychological	Colombia / Spanish	Incorporating mindfulness in the classroom: a pilot study with university students.	The benefits of its application are that it improves the levels of life satisfaction in students, even during a period of high anxiety, such as exam time.

Source: Own elaboration.

Table 2. Number of articles found in each source.

Database	Potentially eligible studies	Selected studies	%
Ebsco	48	3	23
ScienceDirect	30	3	23
Scielo	18	3	23
Scopus	14	3	23
Redalyc	10	1	8
Total	120	13	100

Source: Own elaboration.

Discussion

Originally recognized for its health benefits, mindfulness has emerged as a valuable tool in the educational field. The program's intervention reveals a convergence of findings that significantly support its positive impact on teachers and students. For educators, it has offered an effective resource for dealing with work stress and addressing the diverse behaviors of their students. For students, it has facilitated improved learning by fostering full attention and concentration, while contributing to emotional balance.

The observation of significant sensitivity in teachers after the intervention, as pointed out by Olaya *et al.* (2023), suggests that mindfulness not only influences students directly, but also affects teachers' perception and response to children's emotional needs. This highlights the importance of considering the training and emotional well-being of educators when implementing mindfulness programs. On the other hand, Bellver-Pérez and Menescardi (2022) add evidence by pointing out significant improvements in students' behaviors and psychophysical and behavioral well-being, underlining that the impact of the program goes beyond academic performance, positively affecting the general dynamics of the classroom.

In the same sense, Buccolo and Ferro (2022) highlight the improvement in educators' pedagogical involvement and their understanding of the usefulness of mindfulness. This underlines the importance of education professionals recognizing the relevance of mindfulness practices not only in the academic field but also in their personal and professional well-being. Added to the observation of Suryanto and Nugraha (2022) on the increase in resilience to stress in adolescents, through the mindfulness technique, suggests a valuable tool to improve the quality of learning. However, the decrease in resilience with age highlights the need to adapt interventions to different age groups.

There are consequences of stress on students, which is why Serrão *et al.* (2022) suggest that mindfulness acts as an effective tool to address student demands, such as stress, anxiety and depression. This reinforces the idea that mindfulness can be a comprehensive strategy to address emotional problems in the educational environment.

In parallel, Gonzalez and Lagos (2022), the mindfulness program not only improves self-regulation of attention in children, supporting its effectiveness as an efficient tool in the educational system, but also suggests positive impacts beyond emotional aspects, extending to academic performance. This finding relates to the research of Constantino and Espada (2021), which highlights the essential role of mindfulness in the growth of emotional intelligence in students aged 11 to 14, reinforcing the idea that mindfulness not only influences academic aspects, but also contributes to emotional and cognitive development. Furthermore, Benavides *et al.* (2021) underline the comprehensive capacity of mindfulness to promote development in students, positively affecting self-concept, self-esteem, and cognitive performance. Taken together, these studies support the notion that mindfulness can be a valuable and comprehensive tool to improve various aspects of student well-being, integrating both emotional and academic benefits.

In the work of Baena *et al.* (2021) the implementation of a mindfulness program is highlighted as an effective means to improve attention span and reduce stress in students. The observation of variations in these effects according to gender, educational institution and age underlines the need to consider contextual factors when applying mindfulness interventions in educational settings. This discussion is complemented by the findings of Moreno *et al.* (2020), who suggest that mindfulness not only influences specific aspects such as attention and stress, but also contributes significantly to improving school adaptation and addressing behavioral problems, translating into general improvements in school results. These studies together highlight the relevance of mindfulness in the school environment, not only as a specific approach to certain aspects, but as a comprehensive practice that can have a global impact on student well-being and performance. In addition, they underline the importance of considering contextual variations when designing and implementing mindfulness programs in diverse educational environments.

Taken together, these studies support the idea that implementing mindfulness programs in educational settings can be an effective strategy to improve the emotional well-being, behavior, and performance of both teachers and students. However, the need to tailor

interventions to different age groups and consider specific contextual factors highlights the complexity of successfully implementing mindfulness programs in educational settings.

Conclusion

This technique is not only useful in the health field, but has also gained notoriety within the educational field. Its use has helped both teachers and students. Teachers have learned about work stress and how to deal with certain behaviors of their students, and students have been able to improve their learning through full attention and concentration, while balancing their emotions. In addition, to successfully complete the study, it is necessary for the teacher to be adequately trained in the proper management of the steps of the mindfulness technique; as well as their commitment.

Based on the analysis of various studies, it has been concluded in this study that, in the educational sector, the application of the mindfulness technique has, for the most part, yielded significant results such as the achievement of learning, coping with the effects of stress, anxiety, lack of concentration and depression in students, whether children, adolescents or young people. However, it is noted that it is essential to properly follow the steps involved in using this technique.

For future work, it is recommended – in addition to being interested in the well-being of students through the mindfulness technique – to further investigate its application in teachers, since there are very few studies that deal with it.

Future lines of research

The mindfulness technique is a practice that has gained a lot of acceptance in recent years and this is due to its various benefits aimed at mental and physical health. In the educational field, there are numerous opportunities to benefit not only the student but also the teacher. For this reason, there are several aspects that could be analyzed in more depth, such as:

1. Development of social skills: A study can be carried out on how influential the application of this technique is in improving social skills (empathy and assertive communication).
2. Applications at different educational levels: It is not only applicable to teenagers who attend secondary school or young people at higher education, but also to early childhood

education. There are those who think that depression is not for children; however, that is totally wrong.

3. Integration with existing curricula: The mindfulness technique should not be limited to the area of tutoring or simple research; teachers can integrate it into different areas and work with students from there. This will help reinforce learning and personal development.

4. Impact of the teacher-student-family relationship: This practice would improve the relationship between the main educational entities, resulting in the management of soft skills. These aspects that have been suggested regarding the technique can contribute to improving interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships in educational institutions as long as it is applied appropriately; for this reason, it is important to identify effective ways to integrate it.

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