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Music and Mindfulness and Its Effect on Classroom Community

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EDU 635 Capstone: An Action Research Project

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Abstract

The purpose of this action research project was to determine if music and mindfulness practices may have an effect on classroom community. A mixed-methods study was conducted to determine if there was correlation between minutes spent practicing mindfulness and classroom community building activities and overall satisfaction. Throughout the action research, data was collected to understand the significance of mindfulness and its presence and impacts on classroom community. Results revealed that insignificant correlation was discovered in how many minutes were spent and how it may play a role in overall satisfaction of mindfulness practices and classroom community outcomes. These results conclude that any presence of music, mindfulness, and classroom community building activities is impactful on students' perceptions and overall satisfaction of classroom community and well-being, regardless of implementation time. Data also revealed a positive growth in overall perception, understanding, and satisfaction of mindfulness and classroom community building activities and their presence in everyday lessons. Results of this action research project may influence future research in further promoting the importance of presenting music, mindfulness, and classroom community building activities into everyday lessons along with bringing a stronger understanding of the importance of social-emotional learning, mindfulness, and music presence in our educational settings amongst educators, administration, and the community.

Keywords: music, mindfulness, social-emotional learning, classroom community

Table of Contents

Abstract2

Introduction.....4

Literature Review.....6

Methodology24

 Research Questions24

 Variables24

 Participants and Research Site25

 Plan & Timeline26

 Measurement Tool(s)26

 Anticipated Statistical Analysis28

 IRB28

Data Collection29

Data Analysis30

Discussion

 Findings.....39

 Impact on Teaching and/or Learning39

 Alignment to Research.....39

 Limitations41

Future Research42

Conclusion45

References.....48

Music and Mindfulness and Its Effect on Classroom Community

Today students around the world are facing new and challenging stressors that impact their sense of well-being along with their education. Studies have shown that stress-levels of educators and students are increasing with many factors in play (DiCarlo, Cynthia, Meaux, Ashley, & LaBiche, 2020). As internal and external factors contribute to stress and well-being, researchers are looking into ways of alleviating these within the education setting. To combat these impacts on our students, many practices of music and mindfulness have been focused on and are making innovative changes on how educators utilize their every-day lessons. The concept of music and mindfulness practices and the effects on community in an educational setting have been a subject of research over several decades and has shown great importance in recent years.

Incorporating music and mindfulness practices may allow educators to meet all students' needs and may allow students to develop a positive relationship with peers, teachers, and the educational setting they are in. "Mindfulness approaches have become one of the most widely studied phenomena in the world for treating a myriad of mental health issues" (Kyte, 2016, p. 1146). Children are needing methods and strategies that will help those self-regulate emotions, become social and emotionally stable, and learn how to work with others within their classroom community. Through implementation of various music and mindfulness practices, students may be able to develop a stronger sense of well-being and establish a healthy classroom community that fosters and promotes learning and development (Williams, 2018). Given the opportunities to practice music and mindfulness may allow students to grow and learn through themselves and allow educators to meet the needs of the whole child.

The issue that is present in our classrooms is how students are struggling with various mental health issues and this in turn affects classroom community, sense of well-being, and overall growth and development. Educators and students are affected by these elements and it plays a role in every-day lessons. Classrooms are an important and safe space and provide a great opportunity in facilitating music, mindfulness, and social-emotional learning opportunities to meet all student and teacher needs. One strategy includes guided mindfulness such as breathing exercises that are established with music to be implemented that assist in deeper breathing and connectedness with oneself and others. Utilizing practices as such “promotes musical participation and interaction without requiring an ability to understand complex verbal directions and allows making sense of the musical world, oneself, and others through bodily exploration and experience” (Sutela, Juntunen, Ojala, 2020, p. 81). Many programs over the years have been established and utilized in classrooms to ensure that these needs are being met and furthermore promote the importance of its presence in the classroom.

The focus of this action research project is to determine how music and mindfulness practices along with social-emotional learning strategies may impact the well-being and sense of community amongst fifth grade students and the importance of its presence within our schools. It is important to establish a safe and inviting environment and community for all students to grow within themselves and learn with each other. Educators will be able to utilize the findings of this research to better understand what music and mindfulness practices will help their students build a sense of community within the classroom along with a stronger sense of well-being. The implementation of the information from the research will potentially increase student connection within the classroom along with promoting growth in other aspects in their daily lives. The findings from this research will also bring a stronger understanding of the importance of social-

emotional learning, mindfulness, and music presence in our educational settings amongst educators, administration, and the community.

Resources for this action research study were compiled from the DeWitt Library at Northwestern College in Orange City, Iowa. To ensure validity and inclusion, studies researched for the project were current within the last ten years and published in a peer-reviewed journal. Studies regarding mindfulness practices, music mindfulness practices, social-emotional learning, curriculum implementation, classroom climate and connectedness, music and movement, and various classroom community building activities were reviewed. To establish information for the project, twenty sources were selected based on relevance and the support given in each study. The studies used are for a better understanding of current establishment of music and mindfulness in the classroom and areas for future research.

Review of the Literature

The concept of music and mindfulness practices and the effects on community in an educational setting have been a subject of research over several decades and has shown great importance in recent years. Children are needing methods and strategies that will help them self-regulate emotions, become social and emotionally stable, and learn how to work with others within their classroom community. Research has shown that music and mindfulness practices assist children in developing these important life skills among many other aspects of working with others and academics (Kane, 2017). In our current educational climate, music, mindfulness, and community connection are important in assisting children not only to learn academics in the classroom, but also allows them to develop essential life skills.

The effects of music, social-emotional learning, and mindfulness on the classroom community has been a topic many researchers have sought to understand through a deeper level.

Various studies over the years have shown that mindfulness refers to the ability to pay attention and allow focus to your life in the current setting (Kane, 2017). The practice of mindfulness and the use of music allows individuals to focus in on their feelings and emotions, sensations they may be occurring, and thoughts that are present. Allowing mindfulness to occur influences how individuals learn and connect with one another.

Throughout the literature review, educators and researchers are seeking new and innovative methods to incorporate mindfulness practices to ensure that students are able to grow within themselves and get a better understanding of positive ways to collaborate and work with others within their classrooms and communities. The way we implement these within our educational settings is imperative as well, with educators and researchers being at the forefront of the movement. Through implementation of mindfulness practices into daily lessons or completely changing a classrooms environment, mindfulness has been a topic of further discussion for many.

Mindfulness

Many educators have a baseline understanding of the concept of mindfulness practices and the effects on community in an educational setting, but the topic continues to expand and has been a subject of research over several decades and continues to show great importance in recent years. In a study done in 2020 by researchers Katie Norton and Gemma Griffith, students and educators in the United Kingdom implemented mindfulness practices to better understand the outcomes on its deliverance in the educational setting. The research study composed of 9-10 mindfulness sessions within a regular classroom and focused on space given in each classroom for students (Norton & Griffith, 2020). The results of the study concluded that implementing mindfulness practices allows for students and educators to be connected and assists in emotional

regulation, compassion and empathy for one another, and creates a resilience to common stressors (2020). The study promoted and allowed for students to develop a safe space within their classroom and also fosters a growth in connection between other students and educators. The research study expressed that mindfulness practices assisted children in developing these important life skills among many other aspects of working with others and academics.

In our current educational climate, mindfulness and community connection are important in assisting children not only to learn academics in the classroom, but also allows them to develop essential life skills. Research over the years has shown that mindfulness refers to the ability to pay attention and allow focus to your life in the current setting with kindness and curiosity (Kane, 2017). In a study done by research Michele Kane, three educators were instructed in implementing and practicing mindfulness amongst their talented and gifted students to get a better understanding of how it may affect students and their ability to strengthen cognitive, social, and emotional development. Educators participating in the study developed positive mindfulness practices and strategies and created safe environments for their students to grow within the practices.

“Preparation of the space requires that every element be given great care and attention as students and teachers are able to flourish in places where the physical space reflects thoughtful arrangement” (Kane, 2017, p. 164). This practice connects with researchers Norton and Griffith’s study in which space plays a primary role in developing mindfulness practices (Norton & Griffith, 2020). In contrast, Kane’s research primarily focuses on changing how a space looks, feels, and its overall environment. According to the findings, students were able to adapt to environments and spaces that were not focusing on student achievement as being paramount to success, therefore, were able to perceive mindfulness practices as beneficial for their emotional

and academic growth (Kane, 2017). When given the opportunity, mindfulness practices can influence a classroom climate and environment in promoting peaceful collaboration and growth in a sense of well-being and deeper learning.

Mindfulness practices being present in an academic setting not only plays a role in student's educational lives, but play a fundamental role in educator's lives. Researchers Cynthia Dicarlo, Ashley Meaux, and Erin LaBiche explain in their study conducted in 2019 how the exploration of mindfulness practices may assist in classroom climate and overall stress of students and educators. The study took place in a preschool serving children from birth to Pre-K. The researchers were able to observe and collect data from 41 students in three different classrooms with three educators (Dicarlo et al., 2019). Various learning designs were implemented which provided areas for mindfulness practices and strategies to be used. The findings of the research concluded that various mindfulness practices such as focusing on the present space and environment not only play a role in overall positive outcomes for students but also play a positive role in educator's well-being. Similar to researcher Michele Kane's findings, classroom climate is optimal through connection between student and teacher, therefore, mindfulness practices play a deeper role than previously believed before the research was conducted (Kane, 2017). In other words, mindfulness practices allow for students to grow and develop with one another in a safe and positive environment, and also develop deeper connection not only amongst peers but with educators as well.

The perception of mindfulness has changed a lot over the years and continues to develop into what it is known as today. What was once believed to be similar to meditation and relaxation techniques is now further being explored and defined into its own realm of practice. Researchers in a study completed in 2019 focus on how relaxation and meditation practices when

implemented have many similarities but play two different roles in outcomes. Focusing on six classes of secondary school students, both relaxation and mindfulness practices were implemented for approximately 40 min once a week for 8 weeks (Hayes et al., 2019). Students and educators underwent various practices such as breathing techniques and focused listening. The results of the study concluded that although many practices are similar in both relaxation and mindfulness protocols, mindfulness practices played a deeper role in developing a sense of purpose in the present moment (2019). Moreover, the research conducted proved that mindfulness practices play an important role in not only creating a sense of relaxation and calmness, but assist in developing connection with others.

Researchers at the completion of the study surveyed and collected data that concluded that a deeper connection was made amongst educators and students and their educational environments when utilizing mindfulness practices. Similar to researchers Cynthia Dicarolo, Ashley Meaux, and Erin LaBiche's study, the presence of mindfulness in the classroom promotes a positive learning environment that promotes positive classroom community and climate (Dicarolo et al., 2019). These findings by both research parties further concludes the importance of mindfulness practices in the development of positive and healthy classroom community and climate along with individual growth. The research results also creates a conclusion on how mindfulness strategies and methods continue to evolve and that they are being defined in their own set of practices.

Social-Emotional Learning

Social-Emotional Learning, most commonly known as SEL, is an educational approach to meet students and guide them through learning with social and emotional practices. Educators and various researchers have been implementing social-emotional learning strategies in their

educational settings across the country for many years, but the practices are becoming more common and mainstreamed. Today, educators and researchers are looking to design various models to implement further into every day lessons where students are not only developing life skills but also deeper connections with peers and educators. Now more than ever, the whole child is being focused on and researchers are stressing that academics are not the only aspect needed to be addressed within the classroom, but personal growth needs to be taken in.

Equipping students with the proper social-emotional strategies has been the main research topic in recent years. In a 2018 study done by researchers Ethan Haymovitz, Pia Houseal-Allport, R. Scott Lee, and Juliana Svistova, 32 students in grades 7 and 8 along with their teachers were exposed to various social-emotional strategies to get a better understanding of how various practices affected student connection with one another along with connection between educators. The study focused on restorative justice methods which was the ability to restore relationships and build off of conflict with various restorative conflict resolution practices (Haymovitz et al., 2018). The findings of the study revealed that students felt safer and more involved within their school community and that it was more inclusive amongst the students. Stakeholders within the study also expressed that students had more support with social-emotional issues along with assistance in developing compassion and understanding for one another (2018). Furthermore, the study prevails that the presence of social-emotional learning practices and methods play a key role in classroom community and climate.

For many years, academics have been seen as the primary focus on the educational purposes of school settings, with little reflection on the importance of social-emotional needs within. Researchers in a study conducted in 2020 state that “Despite policymakers’ heightened interest in SEL, there remains a lack of consensus regarding how different aspects of students’

social-emotional skills evolve over time” (West et al., 2020, p.4). The study was conducted within a K-12 school district and focused on how students perceive social-emotional learning practices and curriculum. Conducted within two school years, the research revealed that students benefited from daily practices of social-emotional learning.

Students of all ages were shown to benefit from the lessons and expressed an increase of positive feelings towards classroom climate and overall academics (2020). This compares to the implementation of practices in the study conducted by researchers Haymovitz, Houseal-Allport, Lee, & Svistova in which students concluded that they were able to benefit from social-emotional methods and strategies and felt overall connected with the school and with one another (Haymovitz et al., 2018). In contrast, the 2020 study was able to show a deeper level of how social-emotional learning practices can positively affect and impact young children’s learning and growth in the primary level than what researchers were able to reveal in the 2018 study. In other words, social-emotional learning is not only important amongst secondary education and beyond, but also play a vital role in the primary levels.

While the focus of social-emotional learning has been in the educational setting, social-emotional learning practices have been shown to play a role in positive growth in community. Researchers Carolyn N. Orson, Gina McGovern, and Reed W. Larson were able to gather more insight on how social-emotional learning practices impact the whole child in their 2020 study. The study focused on 32 children ages 14-18 during their time in an outdoor education program (Orson et al., 2020). Through the program studied, students were exposed to various physical and social challenges but were fostered in a safe learning environment by educators.

Students were given several challenges throughout the program and the research gathered data from interviews at the completion of each challenge. Each program challenge involved

social-emotional learning strategies in which the children were able to overcome with the support of their peers and educators. The results of the study proved that the promotion and presence of social-emotional learning strategies and methods played a vital role in overall peer connection, building of community and support, and overall success in challenges presented (2020). The findings of this research compares to Ethan Haymovitz, Pia Houseal-Allport, R. Scott Lee, and Juliana Svistova 2018 study in which educators play a vital role in student growth and implementation of social-emotional learning practices (Haymovitz et al., 2018). Furthermore, both studies reveal that students have a positive experience with social-emotional learning when educators are able to facilitate and guide them along the practices.

Educators play a vital role in their students' lives and they play a key role in growing social and emotional learning within the educational setting. Researchers Alfredo F Palacios and Matthew E Lemberger-Truelove express in their 2019 study that "Early childhood educators provide support to young children and their families in a variety of ways, and yet they often experience insufficient support" (Palacios & Lemberger-Truelove, 2019, p. 1). In other words, in order for social-emotional practices to be successful, we need to also focus on the educators implementing them.

The study by Palacios and Lemberger-Truelove focuses on seven early childhood teachers from all stages of teaching experience with two educators being in their first year, three having between 3 and 8 years of teaching experience, and two having 14 and 16 years (2019). All educators completed weekly recorded consultation sessions and took detailed notes and data collection after each implementation of social-emotional practices within their educational setting.

The results of the study concluded that the presence of social-emotional learning interventions and supports for educators improved various environmental factors, handling of challenging child behavior, and overall professional relationships with their students and administration (2019). The study done by Palacios and Lemberger-Truelove compares to the results of researchers Carolyn N. Orson, Gina McGovern, and Reed W. Larson's study where results show that social-emotional learning is not only important for students, but also shows importance for the educators who are facilitating them (Orson et al., 2020). In another connection with the 2018 study done by researchers Ethan Haymovitz, Pia Houseal-Allport, R. Scott Lee, and Juliana Svistova, the study not only aligns and expresses the importance of social-emotional presence amongst students but also with educators overall outlook of education and the roles educators play. The research further concludes that social-emotional learning practices and strategies play a vital role in building classroom community and relationships amongst educators and peers. Now more than ever social-emotional learning practices and strategies need to be implemented to improve the connections in and outside the educational setting to promote further growth in well-being amongst educators, students, and the overall classroom community.

Classroom Community and Climate

Connection amongst peers and teachers is an important element and opportunity that is present in educational settings. Students are able to build relationships and learn lifelong skills alongside their classmates, giving them unique opportunities to grow in social-emotional areas along with creating a safe place for all. Educators have the ability to make a classroom into a learning and growing environment for all students, and research has been focused on how to develop classroom communities amongst all age groups. The studies presented in this section focus on how vital classroom community and the building of a loving and caring climate is for

students of all backgrounds. For several years researchers have been discovering connections between social-emotional learning practices and mindfulness practices and positive classroom community outcomes.

In today's educational settings, young learners are growing alongside their classmates in academics, social skills, and many other critical milestones. In a 2020 study conducted by researchers Irene Garcia-Moya, Fiona Brooks, and Carmen Moreno, forty-two students aged 11 to 18 in England and twenty three students from a city in Spain participated in a study to gather more understanding of how classroom climate and community is built through various strategies (Garcia-Moya et al., 2020). Students in both areas were placed into focus groups where they underwent various social-emotional learning strategies, mindfulness practices, and team-building activities. The results of study focused on two elements that were related to humanizing relationships and relationships conducive to learning. Students who were a part of the research reported that empathy and perspective taking was more valued amongst peers once implementing the various practices. Moreover, further results concluded that students overall felt more support from peers, teachers, and families when completing various practices and a deeper connection not only with others but within themselves (2020). The findings further conclude that the presence of various methods and strategies such as mindfulness and social-emotional learning in an educational setting promote deeper connections and positive classroom community.

The findings of deeper connection when implementing various methods and strategies such as mindfulness and social-emotional learning can be mirrored in other research studies. Researcher Kerem Coskun focuses their 2019 study on how primary school children who participated in SEL activities developed connection with peers, educators, and with themselves (Coskun, 2019). The study by Coskun focuses on 12 primary aged school children in one

classroom. All children, aged 10, were observed and interviewed for feedback once the research process began. Students followed various social-emotional learning practices, mindfulness practices, and were given opportunities to practice labeling emotions and connecting them with others through various classroom wide activities (2019). Coskun's study can compare to researchers Irene Garcia-Moya, Fiona Brooks, and Carmen Moreno's study in which students were given various team-building and classroom wide activities to build community through various practices such as mindfulness and social-emotional team building (Garcia-Moya et al., 2020). Furthermore, the research conducted in both studies continue to strengthen the argument of the importance of providing students the tools to connect, build, and collaborate with one another through means provided by educators. These various means may include social-emotional and mindfulness practices.

Students today are connected in so many different ways, either through technology or in person, and when given opportunities to connect within an educational setting, classroom community and climate can bloom. Researcher Valerie Vinnard conducted a study in 2019 that focuses not only on classroom community building activities but incorporates music as an element to promote connections. The study focused on students ranging from transitional kindergarten through fifth grade in five elementary schools in the Long Beach Unified School District in California (Vinnard, 2019). Through the study, students were given opportunities to connect through team building activities, social-emotional methods, mindfulness, and the exposure to various musical elements.

One primary focus of the study was to see how classroom community could be built through musical practice in a drum circle (Vinnard, 2019). The study primarily focuses on critical skills such as sharing, taking turns, and self-regulation alongside many other community

building activities and data collection was done through observations through the practices. The results show a dramatic growth in connection amongst students and educators along with development of lifelong skills of working with others and connecting with empathy and respect. Students were able to report that they became empowered to learn more about others in their classroom and in turn felt more connection and a deeper bond with classmates (2019). The practices in the study connect with researcher Kerem Coskun's study in which students were given opportunities for growth and connection through researchers and educators guidance (Coskun, 2019). In other words, educators play an important role in creating classroom climate and communities, and various practices can be implemented through many outlets such as music.

Teacher and student relationships can be associated with classroom climate and community, and researcher Andrew Brake focuses his 2019 study on promoting this connection right from the start of the school year (Brake, 2019). The study focused on 33 ninth grade students in a public high school in Chicago, Illinois and was conducted to gather a better understanding of how various classroom community building activities may alleviate stress and other factors in the transition to secondary education (2019). To gather data for the research, each student was observed in their classroom, individual interviews, and student attendance and grade records were observed.

The results of the study concluded that students who participated felt a stronger connection amongst teachers, classmates, and the overall educational setting. Students were also reported to have a deeper connection with family members in which they were able to share worries and concerns more easily through practices and strategies learned from the study such as mindfulness, social-emotional methods, and guided classroom activities (Brake, 2019). The study can be closely compared to Vinnard's research where students learn together through

various activities to help connect and strengthen bonds between emotions, open sharing, and practice of lifelong skills with peers and educators (Vinnard, 2019). Furthermore, the studies presented all conclude that a classroom climate and community can be built when the presence of activities and other practices such as social-emotional methods, mindfulness, and music are present in an educational setting. Educators also play a vital role in implementing these elements and fostering growth within their settings.

Music Mindfulness Practices

Throughout several decades researchers have sought to find a way to enhance the classroom community experiences for students and teachers alike in the classroom through various methods and strategies. One of the research practices that have prevailed many others includes the use of music and mindfulness. In a 2018 study done by researchers Christina Auerbach and Aletta Delpont, twelve children between the ages of 11 and 14 were participants in various musical activities weekly for ten months (Aurbach & Aletta, 2018). The students attended weekly programs that allowed them to express themselves and build community amongst others in their class through music, movement, and mindfulness practices. The qualitative study focused on building community along with encouraging students to be more mindful of their own abilities and expressions. The findings of the study suggest that students were able to increase awareness of their own ideas and feelings along with being more open and empathetic towards others (2018). In other words, the presence of music and mindfulness and its implementation can promote mindfulness and the creation of classroom community.

Music and mindfulness practices also play a large role in developing early childhood skills such as self-regulation and various executive functions. A study done in the spring of 2018

allowed 24 children between ages 7 and 8 to free explore music movement activities along with mindfulness practices (Williams, 2018). Students who struggled with sensory motor control were able to create a strong connection between self-regulation practices and a deeper connection with their own abilities in the classroom. The students who were part of the study were able to improve their executive function skills along with improving their overall musical abilities. In contrast to Aurbach and Aletta's study, Williams focused not only of building connection between students and promoting a positive classroom community, but also shared how music mindfulness can promote a stronger academic setting (Aurbach & Aletta 2018). However, similar to Aurbach and Aletta's study, students were able to develop critical life skills along with developing connections within their classroom environment, therefore strengthening the need for music and mindfulness to be present.

The importance and relevance of developing self-care practices within the educational setting is stronger now than ever before. Students and teachers are exposed to various stressors in the classroom, and strengthening connections is important for a classroom climate to be a positive space. In a 2013 study done by researcher Frank Diaz, one-hundred and thirty-two students enrolled in music classes or music ensembles were randomly assigned into groups in which they would practice mindfulness practices (Diaz, 2013). The study was done to gather a better understanding on how mindfulness may affect attention in academic settings along with connection amongst peers.

The findings of the study shared that students who underwent various music mindfulness practices experienced deeper connection with peers and the overall music being made and shared. Similar to Williams study, students were reported to have an increase in not only overall connection with peers and teachers, but music mindfulness practices also played a role in

academics in which students were reported to have a reduction in distractions and an increase in productivity (Williams, 2018). In a similar study done by researchers Cristina Mogro-Wilson and Lorin Tredinnick in 2020, three hundred and four students from eight different classrooms participated in various music mindfulness practices along with social-emotional learning methods (Mogro-Wilson & Tredinnick, 2020). In connection to the previous study, the results concluded that students had an increase in positivity related to classroom community and connections amongst peers along with academics. Furthermore, these studies promote the implementation of music mindfulness practices due to the wide affects they hold within the educational setting.

Music mindfulness comes in a variety of forms and is an all-encompassing practice that can be adopted to meet the needs of all students. Researchers Katja Sutela, Marja-Leena Juntunen, and Juha Ojala focus their 2020 study on how the application of music and movement can promote mindfulness, connection, and overall development amongst students of all needs. The study focused on thirteen students between the ages of 15 and 16 who participated in music mindfulness, movement exercises once a week within a special educational school (Sutela et al., 2020). Taking place in a large classroom, educators were able to implement various music mindfulness and movement activities designed by the researchers to gather information on how students who possibly benefit academically and socially.

The study concluded that the implementation of music mindfulness and various movement activities allowed the students to be able to connect and build classroom community and climate with peers and educators (2020). In similar comparison to Aurbach and Aletta's 2018 study, students were able to not only build community with peers and educators, but were also able to identify methods of growth in emotional understanding and recognition of their own

abilities (Aurbach & Aletta, 2018). The studies conducted to gather a better understanding of the effects of music mindfulness in the educational setting all conclude that the presence of music mindfulness practices not only fosters a positive classroom community, but also promotes growth in self-awareness, self-regulation, and meets the needs of the whole child.

Mindfulness Teacher Training Professional Development

Numerous studies over the past couple of decades have shown the importance of mindfulness in the educational setting and its wide variety of positive outcomes on all constituents, but little research has shown how educators are navigated into learning and implementing them. In a 2016 study, researchers sought out to identify how educators could best learn and implement strategies into their everyday lessons. Twenty-two fifth and sixth grade students were placed into six focus groups where they were aimed to enhance outcomes of emotional and cognitive regulatory capacities through mindful practices (Dariotis et al., 2016). Educators were key factors into the implementation and of programming along with providing physical environments, communication about program goals, and communication of program logistics. The findings from the study express that students were able to connect with educators on a deeper level and build classroom community do to the nature of the training the educators received by the outside agency present (2016). Moreover, student connection and classroom community relies heavily on how confident and well adverse the educators are in implementing mindfulness methods and strategies.

The 2016 study can compare closely to Valerie Vinnard's 2019 study where educators were well trained in providing mindfulness programs that included social-emotional aspects along with music elements. Researcher Vinnard expresses in their research findings that "Teachers today have a professional need to create ways that foster SEL activities that build

teamwork, empathy, and respect between and among students as well as with their teachers” (Vinnard, 2019, p. 39). Participants in the study, including transitional kindergarten through fifth grade in a California school, utilized music and mindfulness practices that were taught by researchers to implement. The findings of these studies further promote the importance of teacher training and programming in order for implementation to occur.

In today’s educational field many researchers and educators are striving for wide spread implementation of social-emotional learning along with mindfulness programs to be a core part of curriculum. A study conducted in 2018 argues the importance of implementation and proper training to incorporate mindfulness practices into curriculum. The study followed 137 kindergarten and first grade students from a semi-rural school district (Green et al., 2018). Prior to the study, educators were trained and educated on what practices to implement within their classrooms. The results of the study showed a significant decrease in behavioral issues along with improvements in emotional regulation, building of friendships, and improvement on problem solving.

In comparison to Vinnard’s 2019 study, educators were well-trained in techniques and practices and the study relied heavily on how educators engage with their students along with how they are provided resources to benefit them through practices (Vinnard, 2019). In other words, educators play a critical role in providing their students mindfulness practices, further strengthening the connection to how vital teacher training is for implementation. Educators are the individuals who are with their students every day and who know them the best of their abilities, therefore, need critical training for the cause.

In contrast to the studies previously addressed, researcher Darlene Kyte focuses not primarily on the students but on the teacher themselves. The 2016 study was conducted on

practicing teachers who were in an inner city school and focused on how the shift of mindfulness methods and practices may not only affect them but in turn will affect their students (Kyte, 2016). Teachers underwent various mindfulness practices that allowed them to focus in on their well-being and connectedness to their practice. The results of the study established the importance of mindfulness practices being focused on not only students but educators. Participating educators expressed an increase of empowerment and connection within their educational settings with colleagues and students, along with a larger understanding and appreciation for the importance of the pedagogical placement of mindfulness within our educational settings (2016). Furthermore, studies continue to express the importance of training and professional development amongst educators in order to provide mindfulness practices and methods within their educational settings, however, further research needs to be done to conclude the importance of its presence in curriculum as a whole.

Music, mindfulness, and classroom community has been a topic of study of many researchers over several decades. The extensive positive impacts each practice has on overall connection in the educational setting and other aspects continue to promote the importance of their presence in our everyday lives. With stress and anxiety occurring more frequently in the education setting, mindfulness and music strategies not only benefit the students but also the teachers who are implementing them. A positive and welcoming classroom community is essential for the well-being of students is imperative for students to learn and grow as individuals. Although researchers have found key areas of focus throughout the several years of study, little research has shown how music and mindfulness when combined can build community within a classroom or other educational settings. Therefore, the current study of

music and mindfulness and its effect on classroom community deems pertinent in today's educational settings.

Methodology

Research Questions

The focus of my action research project will be on how music and mindfulness practices can have an effect on classroom community and overall well-being. My research will be conducted to gather a better understanding of how music and mindfulness may affect the whole child and their sense of being within a classroom community. Other aspects I am also going to investigate are how music and mindfulness may influence academics. My overall goal is to understand what can be utilized to assist children in their learning experiences and social needs along with how they work with one another. One research question that is present in the action research project is: Can the use of music and mindfulness practices have an impact on classroom community and climate? A second research question for the project is: Can music and mindfulness practices result in a change in student's well-being?

Variables

The independent variable in my research will be the use of music and mindfulness practices. I am researching to understand if this independent variable will have an effect on my classroom community and climate along with student's sense of well-being. The implementation of music and mindfulness along with various classroom climate building activities may influence how students interact and collaborate with one another. The dependent variables that are present in my research include the classroom community and climate. The classroom community and climate are established, and I am using my independent variable to understand how the interaction may influence it. Another dependent variable present in the research is the well-being

of my students. I will be observing if my independent variable of using music and mindfulness practices will have an effect on how students perceive themselves and their well-being. Other variables that are present but not specifically studied will include the setting, class sizes, socio-economic status, and age of students, special education and behavioral.

Research Site

The research will be conducted within an elementary music classroom that is a part of 3A school district located in Northwest Iowa. The elementary school being utilized for the research is one of three elementary schools in the school district and is the educational setting for over four hundred and fifty students. Each grade level is divided into three sections with the building providing a transitional kindergarten program for the community along with a Behavioral Disorder program. The research project will solely be conducted in the music classroom amongst three sections of fifth grade. The elementary school schedule is made up of a five-day school week and specials such as music and P.E. are able to see each class two times per week.

Participants

The research participants will comprise of seventy-five fifth grade students. Each class is made up of twenty-five musicians who attend music class twice a week. Students range from age 10-11 years old. Five of the seventy-five children are considered to be a part of the special education program and fifteen of the seventy-five students are part of the talented and gifted program. The socio-economic status of the students within the fifth grade considered in the study range from low to middle class with a small portion being a part of the upper class. A small portion of the participants have had access to music and mindfulness practices and programs that are provided within the community, but majority of the participants have never practiced music and mindfulness.

Plan and Timeline

Students will be learning music and mindfulness practices through the action research study in the spring of 2023. The research study will begin on March 1, 2023, and will conclude on April 7, 2023. The goal is to implement the project in the middle of the school year to better understand how students develop classroom community and positive climate later in the year. The research study will take a total of six weeks to conduct. Throughout the six weeks, the students will be discussing and learning about mindfulness strategies. For three weeks the students will be implementing various strategies along with being involved in activities that will allow for a better understanding of music and mindfulness effects on classroom community and climate along with well-being.

Students will be meeting twice a week for six weeks for a total of twelve meetings throughout the research process. Many tools will be used throughout the research process, such as the use of observational journals for myself, personal journaling and well-being projects, and classroom community-based reflections and activities. Data will be collected by individual student's journal entries, my personal observation journal entries, and through activities and assessments given throughout the research study. Numerical data will be collected through a final rating chart that rates between one and five with one being low and five being the best at the conclusion of the three week data collection period. Personal journaling and well-being projects will be prompted and created by me, therefore, there is no information on validity and reliability. Classroom activities and reflections on behavior will also be prompted and created by me and therefore do not have information on validity and reliability of these measurement instruments.

I have chosen the fifth-grade section because they are preparing to go to middle school after this year of elementary school, and I want to prepare them with music and mindfulness practices that will hopefully allow them build community in the middle school. My role as an action researcher throughout the research project is to implement the independent variables along with allowing students to grow into the music and mindfulness practices individually. My goal as a researcher is to open the world of music and mindfulness practices for all students to be able to personally reflect on what works for them.

On the first day of the research project, students will learn about music and mindfulness practices, various social emotional strategies being implemented, and about the procedures following the practices. The students will then communicate and participate in a baseline discussion forum about their views and feelings about the current classroom community. The same discussion forum will be implemented at week six as a conclusion to the research project. Throughout the course, students will be exposed to various music and mindfulness practices and activities that will allow them to grow into the practices.

Starting on week one, students will learn about breathing exercises and various strategies involving music and mindfulness. As each week progresses, more in depth music and mindfulness practices will be added. Students will also be engaged in classroom community activities each day to allow them to work with others and build a sense of belonging within the classroom. Each activity will be related to music and mindfulness practices. Weeks two, three, and four will be used to implement various music and mindfulness practices, social-emotional learning, classroom community building activities, personal journaling, and will conclude with a rating chart survey. Each student at the conclusion of week four will identify how they feel about overall classroom community on a scale of 1-5, with five being the highest rating. They will also

rate overall satisfaction of mindfulness practices utilized. The students will also utilize personal journal entries each week that will allow for a deeper reflection of well-being and feeling of community in the classroom because of music and mindfulness.

All data collected will be stored on a digital device that is protected and only accessed by the researcher. At the completion of the research project, all information that may be personal in nature will be discarded. The use of a correlational statistical test will be utilized to gather numerical data information regarding the minutes of mindfulness practices for each student and their rating charts for both mindfulness practices and overall feelings of classroom community. The goal is to understand if there is a correlation between lengths of mindfulness implementation and how students perceive classroom community and mindfulness practices.

Normal music curriculum practices will be implemented along with mindfulness practices and SEL strategies. The various procedures I am using are a standard educational practice that aligns with music curriculum and standards (breathing exercises, collaboration, classroom community building, etc.). Research data will not include grades, test scores, class assignments, or class evaluations. All students' information and data will be anonymous. Nothing in the personal and private nature will be recorded in the data. The research conducted will not in any way put student's education and reputation among other aspects at risk. The research conducted will not interfere with student's learning and will include normal educational practices. The project will only take place within the music classroom. With all these safeguards in place, the IRB Committee of Northwestern College in Orange City, Iowa has approved an IRB Exemption Application.

Data Collection

The independent variable in my research will be the use of music and mindfulness practices. The dependent variables that are present in my research include the classroom community and climate. Other dependent variables include well-being of my students. The data needed for collection in my research project will be made up of observations, personal journaling and reflections on mindfulness practices, classroom activities and reflections made up of two rating scale charts given at the completion of implementation. Personal journaling and well-being projects will collect qualitative data. Classroom activities that include personal reflection and collaboration with others will be qualitative data. The use of rating charts will provide a collection of quantitative data.

Personal journaling and well-being projects were implemented once a week for six weeks. Students were prompted to write about how mindfulness practices are affecting their mood, classroom climate ideology, and overall well-being. Students completed these in individual journals and turned them in at the end of the week. Each student was assigned a number to keep the data from each journal anonymous. Each week I read through personal entries and gathered information on overall impacts of music and mindfulness practices. Classroom community and climate activities and reflections were conducted two times per week for three weeks. At the completion of the third week, a rating scale sheet was utilized to gather information on overall outlook of classroom community climate and overall feeling of mindfulness practices. The rating scale will be a 1-5 rating, with five being the highest. Students were given the rating scale with full anonymity, and rated their overall perception of mindfulness and their feelings of classroom community at the end of week three.

Throughout the action research project, students were placed in various groups to collaborate with mindfulness practices and classroom climate building activities. Data collection regarding observations were conducted by myself, and students were also prompted to reflect on their experiences each day on a piece of paper as a closer for each class. Through the use of observations, I gathered data by using observational notes with various prompts created by myself each day to have a better understanding of how each day progressed or digressed through the research project process. Through this, I was able to gather more insight and details on how each week played a role in the implementation of music and mindfulness along with the effects it had on classroom community.

Findings

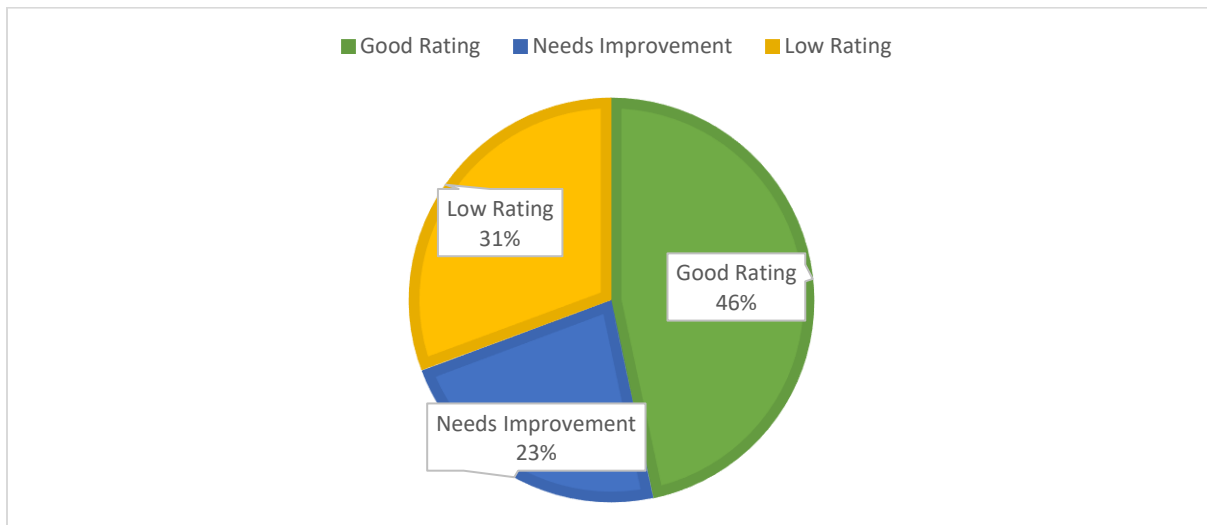
Data Analysis

Throughout the data collection period the overall goal of the action research was to understand what can be utilized to assist children in their learning experiences and social needs along with how they work with one another. A total of seventy-five students participated in the action research project to see if there is a relation with the use of music and mindfulness practices and the possible impact on classroom community and climate. The data collection was also utilized to gather an understanding if music and mindfulness practices result in a change in student's well-being. The goal is to understand if the presence of music and mindfulness practices within a classroom setting will allow students to connect with one another by working together through listening, breathing, team building, and collaboration activities and whether the amount of minutes exposed to mindfulness practices would play a role in overall satisfaction.

Both qualitative and quantitative data was collected throughout the data collection period. Qualitative data in this action research project included personal observations conducted by the

researcher and personal journaling done by the students. Qualitative data also included the use of classroom building projects such as musical team building activities that allowed students to collaborate with peers within a team. Quantitative data included the use of rating scales that were conducted at the completion of the data collection period and to gather a baseline understanding of the current setting. A total of 120 minutes of music and mindfulness practices along with classroom community building activities were available to students in a four week implementation period. Out of the seventy-five students, the average minutes of music and mindfulness along with classroom community building activities was 114.8 minutes per student.

In the first week of implementation, musicians participated in an open discussion forum to gather a baseline of what they believed music and mindfulness is and how it can impact our day to day lives. Students were also able to discuss what the current baseline of classroom community is within their individual classes and as a whole grade. Each student was encouraged to participate in the discussion and share their viewpoints on how they feel about the current classroom climate. Following the open discussion forum, students completed a baseline exit ticket survey that had them rate their current feelings of classroom climate. The students were prompted to check mark in the exit ticket survey whether they felt that the current classroom climate deserved a “good rating” meaning everything was comfortable and well, a “needs improvement” rating where there needs to be various interventions done to improve the situation, or a “low rating meaning” that the current classroom climate needs to be adjusted dramatically. Figure 1 shows the data at the completion of the baseline survey prior to implementation and displays that out of the seventy-five students who answered, 46% stated that the current classroom climate was good, 23% state that the current classroom climate needs improvement, and 31% scored a low rating stating that they are dissatisfied with the current classroom climate.

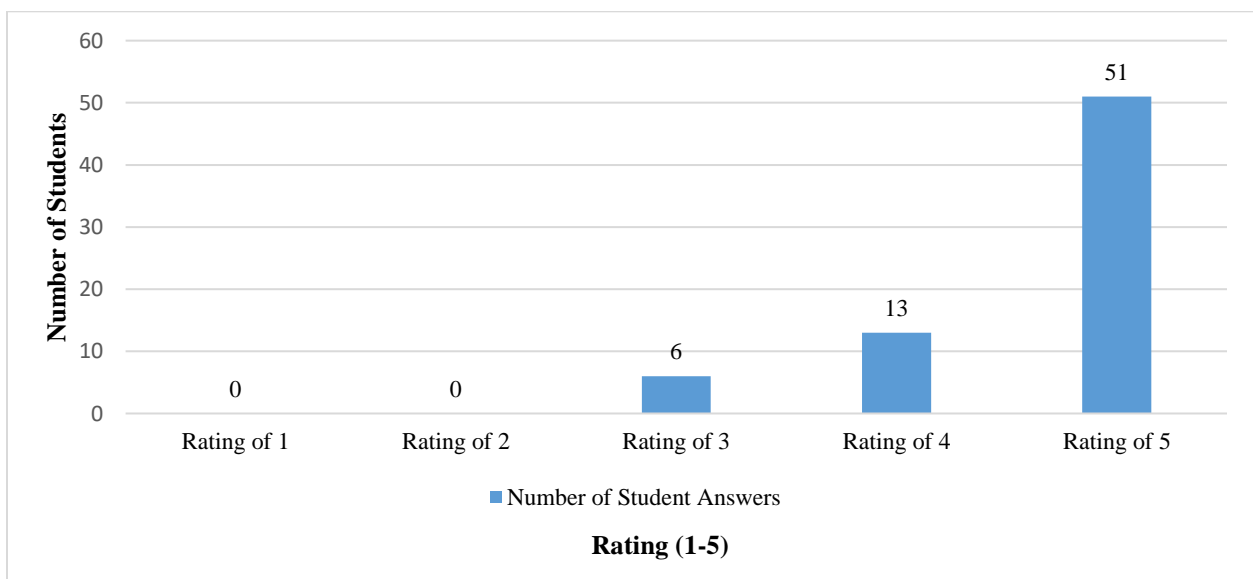
Figure 1*Baseline Ratings of Classroom Climate*

Starting on week one, students learned various breathing exercises and strategies involving music and mindfulness. The researcher had students practice various deep breathing techniques and mindfulness moments. Students listened to music that utilized a slow steady beat to allow them to focus in on their breathing and surroundings. In week two, students were engaged in classroom community activities each day to allow them to work with others and build a sense of belonging within the classroom along with exercises that were previously taught and utilized in week one. Each activity allowed them to work with different classmates each day. One activity that was implemented each day was related to composing rhythms in groups of four which allowed for various combinations of students and rhythms to utilize. With the data collected through observations, students struggled to work with others in the implementation of this project in week two, but later progressed to be able to collaborate with each classmate and in larger groups. In week four of the research project, students were given a rating chart for overall satisfaction of music and mindfulness activities along with a rating chart that would allow them to express their overall well-being and satisfaction in classroom community.

To collect data and to allow for a quantitative analysis, a correlational statistical test was applied to these rating charts. A correlation statistical test analysis was done on the overall satisfaction of music and mindfulness along with classroom community to see if there was a correlation between the amount of minutes of mindfulness practices and overall satisfaction. The scores being analyzed were between one and five with five being the highest possible score. A rating of one expressed that the individual did not gain any growth in overall satisfaction from mindfulness. A rating of two expressed that they had little satisfaction with the implementation of mindfulness and a rating of three expressed a neutral feeling towards mindfulness. A rating of four states that they were satisfied and a rating of five states that they are highly satisfied from the outcomes of utilizing mindfulness. Figure 2 displays the number of students who gave each rating of one through five after 120 minutes of mindfulness practice. The correlation analysis revealed that minutes spent practicing music, mindfulness, and classroom community activities and overall satisfaction rating to be negative, $r(73)=-.15$, $p < .198967$.

Figure 2

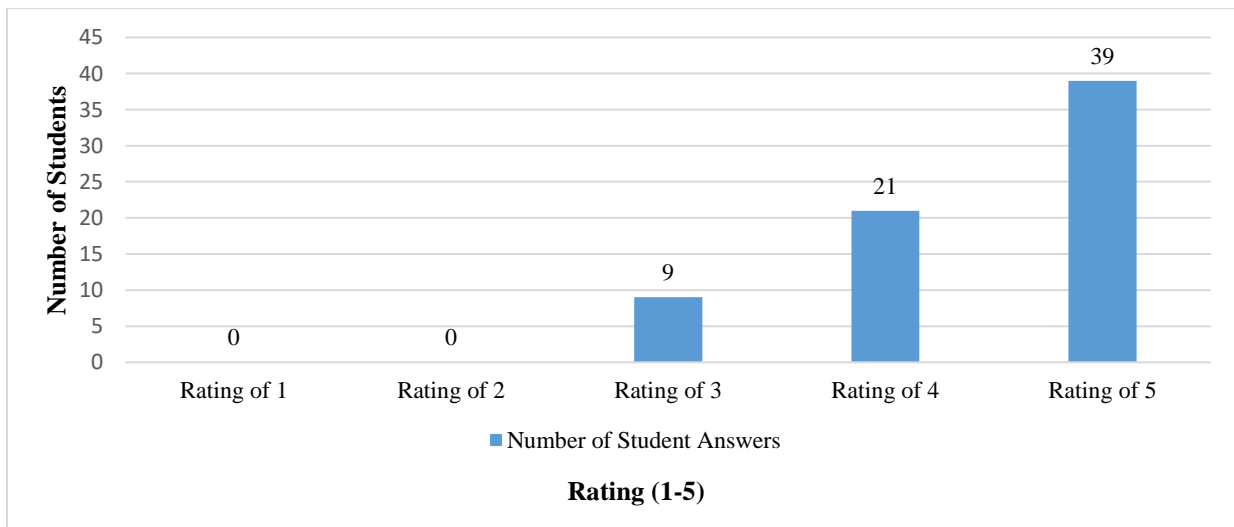
Rating of Satisfaction from Mindfulness Practices after 120 Minutes



Another correlation analysis was done to understand if there was a correlation between the amount of minutes of mindfulness practices and overall score rating of satisfaction of classroom community. The rating chart was between one and five, with five being the highest. A rating of one expressed that the individual did not gain any growth in overall satisfaction of classroom climate. A rating of two expressed that they had little satisfaction with the classroom climate and a rating of three expressed a neutral feeling towards classroom climate. A rating of four states that they were satisfied with the classroom climate and a rating of five states that they are highly satisfied with the classroom climate. Figure 3 displays the number of students who rated their satisfaction between one and five after 120 minutes of music, mindfulness, and classroom building activities. The correlation analysis revealed a negative correlation, $r(73) = -.08$, $p < .495063$.

Figure 3

Rating of Satisfaction with Classroom Climate after 120 Minutes

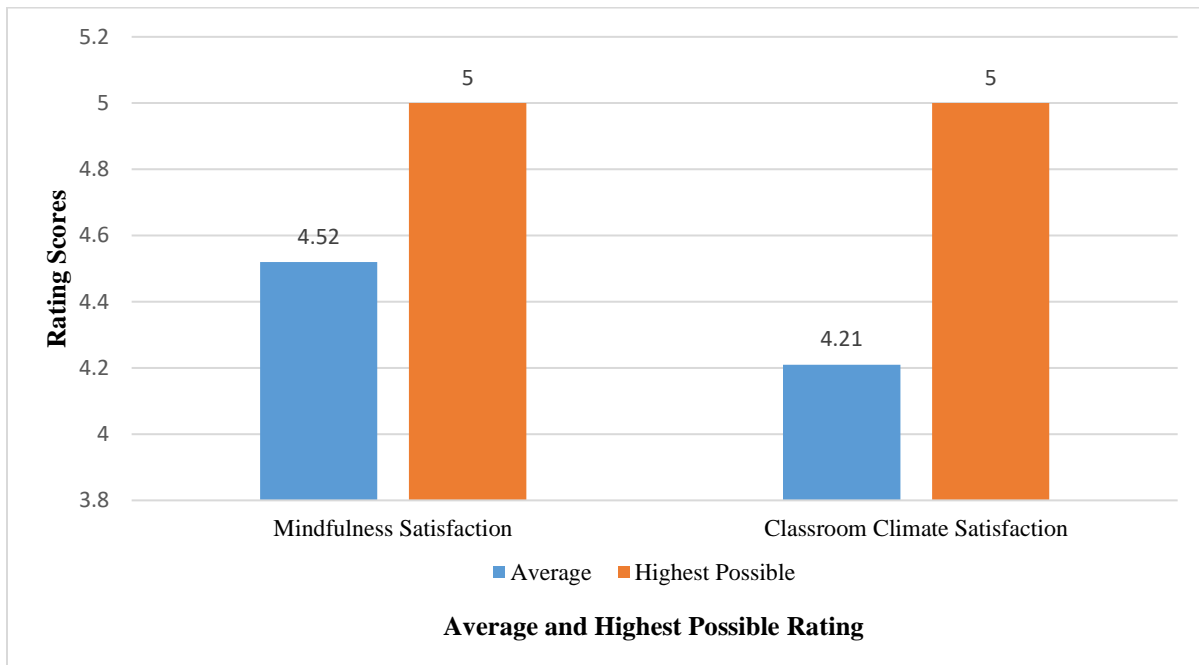


Although both correlation analysis showed a negative correlation, the average rating of overall satisfaction towards mindfulness practices and classroom building activities between the seventy-five students is 4.52 out of 5 which shows a positive between minutes spent practicing

mindfulness and classroom community building activities and overall satisfaction. The average rating of overall well-being and feelings of classroom community between the seventy-five students is 4.21 out of 5 which again shows a positive between minutes spent practicing music and mindfulness along with classroom community and overall satisfaction and feeling of a strong classroom community. Figure 4 displays a comparison of the average rating number of all the students' scores and the highest possible rating of five. When analyzing the data from both rating charts, the number of minutes did not significantly affect overall satisfaction of music and mindfulness or classroom climate. Students who were exposed to 120 minutes of mindfulness practices and classroom community activities scored similarly to those who were exposed to less than 120 minutes.

Figure 4

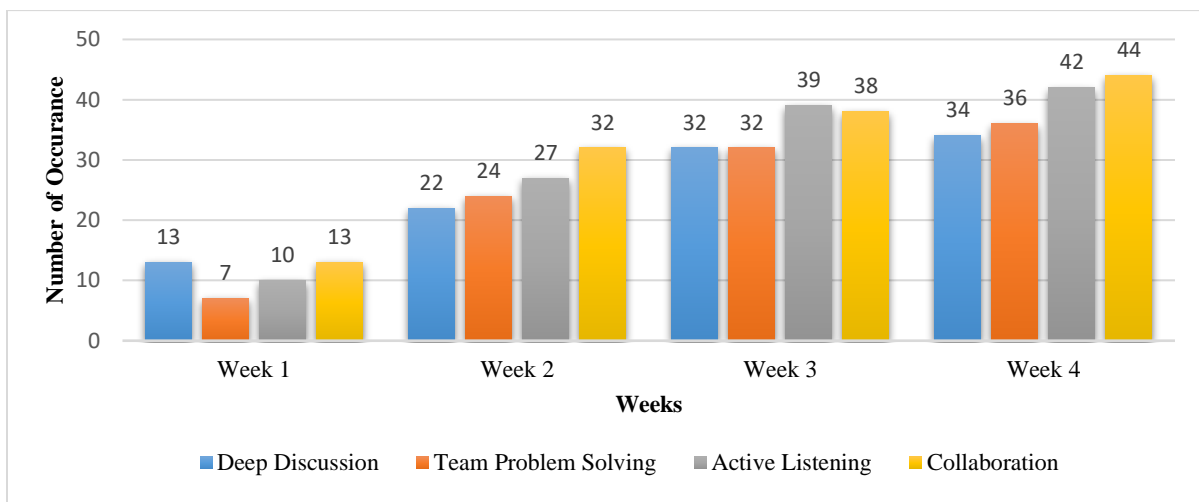
Average Rating Compared to Highest Possible Rating



Throughout the research process, qualitative data was also collected through various means such as personal journaling, classroom community building projects, and personal observation by the researcher. The researcher observed and collected data related to overall teamwork collaboration with classroom community building projects such as composing and rhythm building activities and how they activity listened and problem solved with one another. The researcher observed every day throughout the data collection and marked down the number of times students engaged in deep discussion with one another, team problem solving, active listening, and collaboration. The number of times each was marked in four weeks' time is displayed in Figure 5. Overall, the observational data collected by the researcher showed a growth of the frequency of each that was observed each week, which concludes a deeper and closer sense of connection between students within their classroom setting.

Figure 5

Number of Times Each Occurred in Four Weeks

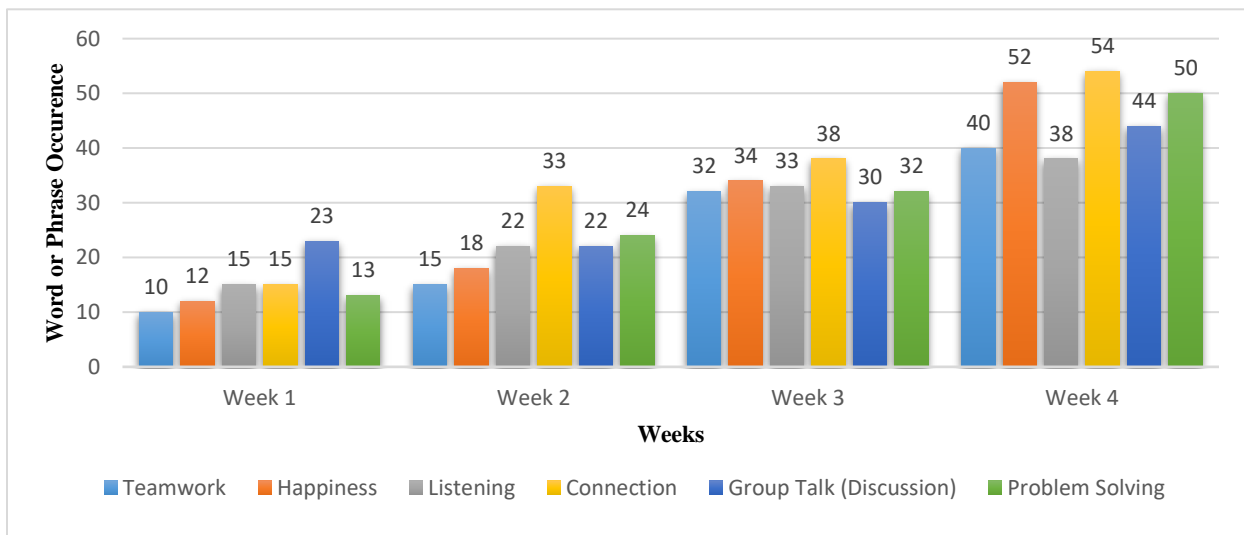


Students were also prompted to reflect on their overall experiences by using personal journals and were encouraged to express themselves freely for four weeks. Students were prompted to discuss how they felt with overall satisfaction of mindfulness, classroom

community, and overall well-being. While reading each personal journaling responses each week, the researcher recorded the number of times certain trend words and phrases were mentioned throughout the four weeks. The data from these recorded numbers is shown in Figure 6. These trend words and phrases included anything related to the discussion of teamwork, happiness, listening, connection, group talk (discussion), and problem solving. At the end of week four, the number of times each word or phrases that included these words increased with relation to positive outcomes. Students who utilized these words and phrases expressed that there was a positive increase in frequency of the amounts of teamwork strategies that were in place. Student journaling also expressed an increase in the number of times student mentioned happiness and overall satisfaction with working with others. Students expressed in their writing over the four weeks that classmates were actively listening to their ideas and beliefs with classroom community building activities and allowed for more discussion and problem solving time.

Figure 6

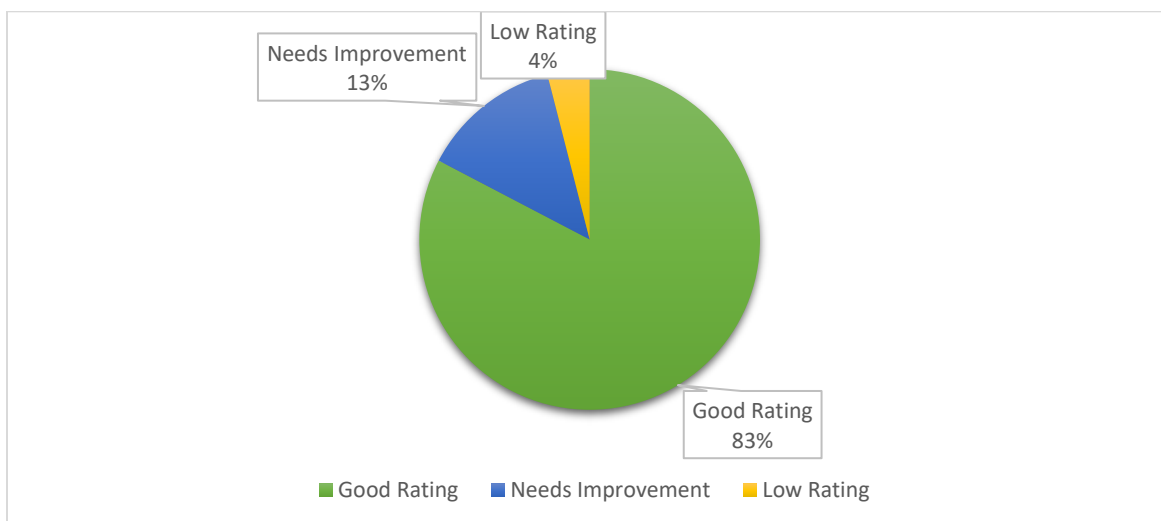
Number of Times Mentioned In 4 Weeks



At the completion of the data collection and journaling period, the students completed an exit ticket survey identical to the baseline exit ticket given on week one. The students were prompted to check mark in the exit ticket survey whether they felt that the current classroom climate after implementation of music, mindfulness, and classroom building activities deserved a “good rating” meaning everything was comfortable and well, a “needs improvement” rating where there needs to be various interventions done to improve the situation, or a “low rating” meaning that the current classroom climate needs to be adjusted dramatically. The results from the final rating survey exit ticket reports is displayed in Figure 7 and shows that out of the seventy-five students who participated, 83% gave a good rating, 13% gave a needs improvement rating, and 4% gave a low rating. These final results when compared to the initial baseline survey reading prove that music, mindfulness, and the implementation of classroom community building activities has an effect on overall classroom climate and satisfaction of well-being at the completion of the action research project.

Figure 7

Final Rating of Classroom Climate



In a final discussion forum held after the data collection period, twenty-two students expressed that they felt more comfortable in the classroom setting and that they felt that peers were able to understand each other better when it comes to collaborating and learning with one another. Twelve students expressed in the final discussion that they were hesitant to work with others in various mindfulness and classroom building activities at the initial implementation, however, as the activities and practices developed, they felt that they have gained more trust and comfort with one another. Seventeen students also reported in the final discussion forum to have had a deeper connection between themselves and how they interact with others within their setting after the action research project.

Discussion

Summary of Major Findings

One primary goal of the action research was to understand what can be utilized to assist children in their learning experiences and social needs along with how they work with one another. This primary goal is closely related and further connected to Williams (2018) study where results showed the implementation of various music and mindfulness practices and its relation to the development of a stronger sense of well-being and established healthy classroom community that fosters and promotes learning and development. The goal is to understand how giving the opportunities such as music and mindfulness practices may allow students to grow and learn through themselves and allow educators to meet the needs of the whole child. Another goal was to understand if the presence of music and mindfulness practices within a classroom setting will allow students to connect with one another and whether the amount of minutes exposed to mindfulness practices would play a role in overall satisfaction. When analyzing the baseline understanding and satisfaction towards mindfulness and classroom community and the

final results of seventy-five students who participated in the action research project, the overall satisfaction increased dramatically within the four week data collection period. It is evident that the presence of mindfulness and classroom community building activities played a role in how students perceived each other and how they can work together to build a more positive learning environment. Students also expressed through their personal weekly journaling and final discussion forum how they felt more connection, happiness, and overall more teamwork satisfaction at the completion of the action research. These results relate closely and are consistent to a Sutela et al., (2020) study that focused on students who participated in music mindfulness, movement exercises once a week and later concluded that the implementation of music mindfulness and various movement activities allowed the students to be able to connect and build classroom community and climate with peers and educators.

In comparing weekly results from observations and journal entries through four weeks, students were more open to discuss and share their overall ideas and feelings with the researcher and their classmates on their ideas and opinions of what music, mindfulness, and classroom climate is to them as each week progressed. In week one of implementation, results of mindfulness and classroom climate from journaling, daily activities, and baseline discussion were nascent. As each week progressed, students were able to share that their overall satisfaction, understanding of importance of mindfulness and classroom community, and connection with one another increased. These results are closely related and can compare to researchers Irene Garcia-Moya, Fiona Brooks, and Carmen Moreno's study in which students were given various team-building and classroom wide activities to build community through practices of mindfulness and social-emotional team building (Garcia-Moya et al., 2020). The results of the action research and the 2019 study both express that the presence of music,

mindfulness, and classroom community building activities provides growth in positive outcomes as further implementation is utilized.

Data was analyzed through a correlation statistical test to understand if there was a correlation between minutes spent utilizing mindfulness practices and classroom community building activities and overall satisfaction. At the completion of the research, an insignificant correlation was discovered in how many minutes were spent and how it may play a role in overall satisfaction of mindfulness practices and classroom community outcomes. The results of the correlational statistical test revealed findings similar to Auerbach and Aletta (2018) where the presence of music and mindfulness and its implementation can promote mindfulness and the creation of classroom community regardless of amount of time each student practices them. Students in both the action research and the 2018 study who were absent and received less amount of mindfulness practice and classroom community building activity time did not score any different than those who were present. The results further show that the mere presence of music, mindfulness, and classroom community building activities is impactful on students' perceptions and overall satisfaction of classroom community and well-being, regardless of implementation time. The results of the action research has impacted the researchers teaching strategies in which they are more aware of the importance of mindfulness practices and classroom community activities to build a positive learning and teaching environment.

Limitations of the Study

As in many action research projects, there are limitations that are present in research. Limitations and other issues or factors may have an effect on the outcomes but knowing of how they may influence the results will allow the researcher to understand their overall practices and data in a deeper sense. As a researcher, it is important to address these possibilities so that there

is an understanding of what limitations and issues, or factors were present at the given time. One limitation that was present throughout the action research is the amount of classroom time to implement music, mindfulness, and classroom building activities and practices. Each class was given a thirty minute class time twice a week. Of the thirty minutes, only ten to fifteen minutes were able to be dedicated each day due to curriculum factors. This limitation often caused an overall rushed feeling throughout the research process, which may have an impact on the overall results. It is possible that if given more time, a variety of different practices both in music and mindfulness and classroom community building activities may have been present, resulting in a different outcome.

The time of day each class met with the researcher and the time the implementation takes place may have played a role in the research. Each of the three classes met at different times of the day, with two meeting at the beginning of the school day and one meeting after lunch in the early afternoon. It is possible that the time of day affected overall focus and perception of mindfulness and classroom community activities, therefore limiting outcomes. Many students in the two classes meeting at the beginning of the school day were observed to be more lethargic and lacking of overall focus while the class meeting in the early afternoon had a dramatic change in alertness and overall attitude.

Another limitation present in the research is the space of the classroom utilized. The music classroom utilized for the research is a medium sized space that is limited to windows and adequate spacing for students to separate from one another. This limited each class of twenty-five students to a smaller area to utilize various mindfulness practices which required more space. The classroom space also limited classroom community building activities to small areas

for students to connect and collaborate. It is possible that the presence of a larger space may play a role in overall satisfaction of mindfulness practices and classroom community.

Future Research

The findings from the study of music, mindfulness, and its effects on classroom community have further inspired the researcher to look into various ways to implement the research in different areas. One area for future study may include a younger level of students such as kindergarten or first grade. Students at this age level are in the formative years of their social connections and overall peer relationship building. The study results could then be compared to the fifth grade results and outcomes and could then be useful in designing practices that meet each age level. Fifth grade students often have a sense of classroom community and what it is like to build upon it, whereas, younger children have less amount of contact time with peers due to their age and time in a classroom. The findings revealed from the action research shows that implementation of music and mindfulness can improve classroom community connections. Using these findings may help establish a positive classroom community early on in the educational experiences of students, where they are able to further develop skills and areas to work with one another. The findings may also help in designing lessons and adapting current practices for younger children.

Another area for future study could be the time of year the implementation of research takes place. Often students come back to school after summer break with various areas of growth in both social and emotional learning aspects. The future study could be utilized at the beginning of the school year to understand how overall mindfulness and well-being along with classroom community is perceived at the start of a new year. Results from this study could then be compared and utilized to understand what mindfulness practices and classroom climate building

activities may need to be implemented. Understanding how students may feel towards classroom climate and overall well-being and mindfulness at the beginning of a new school year may allow for deeper connection and implementation to further promote growth in classroom community and well-being throughout the entire school year. The results from this action research were taken from the third quarter of the school year, where students are most often established into the current classroom community that has been present in quarter one and quarter two. The results from the research may improve practices to meet the needs of all students at the beginning of the school year where they need more guidance in developing a classroom community. Providing music and mindfulness practices at the beginning of the year may allow for further positive development of classroom community throughout the school year.

Future research may also include the implementation of mindfulness practices and classroom community building activities in other classes labeled essential such as art and physical education. The research results may provide a deeper understanding of how students learn and work with one another in other areas of their learning. This future study may also provide insight on how students interact and engage with one another throughout the school day. A study such as this may also open a plethora of outlets for students to further connect with one another and build a deeper connection between their classroom community and within themselves, further expressing the importance of mindfulness and classroom community connection. The findings from the action research revealed that students felt more connection with one another and were able to establish a more positive classroom community. Using these results to develop lessons for future implementation in other essential classes may provide improvement on classroom community in other areas of the student's day.

Conclusion

In classrooms around the world today, many issues present amongst students relate to how students are struggling with various mental health issues and this in turn affects classroom community, sense of well-being, and overall growth and development. Students are facing new and challenging stressors that impact their sense of well-being along with their education. Educators and students are affected by these elements and it plays a role in every-day lessons. However, music and mindfulness practices can play a large role in an individual's development and sense of well-being and can establish a strong sense of classroom community.

The purpose of this action research project was to determine if music and mindfulness practices may have an effect on classroom community. A mixed-methods study was conducted to determine if there was correlation between minutes spent practicing mindfulness and classroom community building activities and overall satisfaction. Throughout the action research, data was collected to understand the significance of mindfulness and its presence and impacts on classroom community. Results revealed that insignificant correlation was discovered in how many minutes were spent and how it may play a role in overall satisfaction of mindfulness practices and classroom community outcomes. These results conclude that any presence of music, mindfulness, and classroom community building activities is impactful on students' perceptions and overall satisfaction of classroom community and well-being, regardless of implementation time. Results from other areas of data collection also revealed a positive growth in overall perception, understanding, and satisfaction of mindfulness and classroom community building activities and their presence in everyday lessons.

The literature review of this study explored areas of mindfulness and classroom community building and its presence in classrooms around the world. The concept of music and

mindfulness practices and the effects on community in an educational setting have been a subject of research over several decades and has shown great importance in recent years. A study reviewed of mindfulness and classroom community presence and its impacts reveal that students feel safer and more involved within their school community (Haymovitz et al., 2018).

Schooling and education are now focusing on the whole child and their social and emotional needs along with academics. Music and mindfulness practices can have a large impact on classroom community and climate. A similar study to this action research reviewed in the literature review also revealed that students who practiced mindfulness and classroom community activities overall felt more support from peers, teachers, and families when completing various practices and a deeper connection not only with others but within themselves (Garcia-Moya et al., 2020). Along with this, students are able to develop a stronger sense of well-being and can learn about their own needs in the classroom. The literature reviewed for this action research study indicated that the presence of music and mindfulness practices appear to be beneficial in establishing a strong sense of classroom community and sense of well-being.

Results of this action research project may influence future research in further promoting the importance of presenting music, mindfulness, and classroom community building activities into everyday lessons. When given the opportunity to practice music and mindfulness, students grow in social-emotional learning and within themselves. Establishing music and mindfulness practices allows educators to meet all students' needs and allows them to promote positive classroom communities, well-being, and academic growth. "Mindfulness approaches have become one of the most widely studied phenomena in the world for treating a myriad of mental health issues" (Kyte, 2016, p. 1146). Now more than ever, children are needing assistance in how to self-regulate emotions, become social and emotionally stable, and learn how to work with

others within their classroom community. With the presence of mindfulness and classroom community building, students are able to build a stronger sense of well-being and establish a healthy classroom community that fosters and promotes learning and development (Williams, 2018). The implementation of the conclusions and results from the action research will potentially increase student connection within the classroom along with promoting growth in other aspects in their daily lives. The findings from this research may also bring a stronger understanding of the importance of social-emotional learning, mindfulness, and music presence in our educational settings amongst educators, administration, and the community.

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