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Mindfulness and Emotional Intelligence as Predictors of Self-Efficacy in High School Students

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Abstract: This research aims to explore the potential of mindfulness and emotional intelligence as predictors of self-efficacy among high school students. A quantitative approach using a correlational design was employed, with 68 grade XI students at Bodhicitta Buddhist High School in Medan selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected using the Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ), Emotional Intelligence Scale, and General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSES). Multiple regression analysis revealed that emotional intelligence significantly influenced self-efficacy ($p = 0.000$), while mindfulness showed no significant effect ($p = 0.067$), although it exhibited a strong correlation ($r = 0.659$). The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.628$) indicates that mindfulness and emotional intelligence collectively explain 62.8% of the variability in self-efficacy, while other factors account for 37.2%. The findings highlight that emotional intelligence is the dominant predictor of self-efficacy, whereas mindfulness is supportive. Given these results, emotional intelligence training is recommended as a key strategy for enhancing students' self-efficacy, while structured and long-term mindfulness interventions may further complement this development. The findings provide valuable insights for emphasizing the necessity of a holistic educational approach, blending emotional intelligence training with mindfulness-based strategies to enhance students' psychological resilience and academic success.

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Introduction

In the context of the Industrial Revolution, 5.0 and the growing integration of artificial intelligence (AI), high school students are increasingly exposed to academic complexity, emotional stress, and competitive educational demands (Nur et al., 2022; Jovini et al., 2024). The digital transformation of education has made it essential for students to master 21st-century competencies, particularly the 4Cs: collaboration, communication, creativity, and critical thinking (Daugherty & Sahin-Topalcengiz, 2023; Nurhayati et al., 2024). Alongside high academic demands, students are also exposed to social and emotional stress due to heightened competition and expectations within the education system (Pascoe et al., 2020; Wahyuni et al., 2024). Therefore, cultivating psychological resources, especially self-efficacy, becomes crucial for supporting students' academic achievement and psychological well-being (Putri et al., 2024).

Self-efficacy, an individual's belief in their capacity to complete tasks and achieve goals, significantly influences learning motivation and performance (Honicke et al., 2023; Salsabila et al., 2024). Self-efficacy is one of the main psychological factors contributing to students' academic success and psychosocial well-being (Baños et al., 2023). Introduced by Bandura (1997), self-efficacy represents how individuals perceive their competence to

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execute behaviors necessary for specific outcomes. In academic contexts, students with high self-efficacy are more motivated, resilient under pressure, and capable of applying adaptive coping strategies (Adams et al., 2020; Norouzi, 2023). Thus, strengthening self-efficacy is essential for academic outcomes and psychosocial stability (Baños et al., 2023).

Among the various psychological constructs influencing self-efficacy, two stand out for their complementary roles: mindfulness and emotional intelligence. In Buddhist education, mindfulness holds unique significance as it is deeply integrated into pedagogical practice and ethical cultivation (Lam & Seiden, 2020; Badawy, 2022). Mindfulness, commonly defined as full awareness of the present moment without judgment (Partono et al., 2020; Ferry et al., 2023; Fendy et al., 2023), has been shown to reduce academic stress, enhance emotional regulation, and foster resilience (Surya et al., 2023; Harahap & Lubis, 2024). It also helps students improve concentration and emotional stability, thereby enhancing self-efficacy through better regulation of internal experiences (Mettler et al., 2023; Zuo & Wang, 2023).

Educational research further supports the link between mindfulness and student performance. Choi et al. (2021) and Liu et al. (2022), found that consistent mindfulness practice can positively impact academic achievement and psychological well-being. Alomari (2023), also reported that students who practiced mindfulness showed better academic engagement and lower stress levels. Specific cases, such as school-based mindfulness programs in Kosovo, demonstrated improvements in students' self-confidence and coping abilities, highlighting the potential of mindfulness-based education to boost self-efficacy (Hyseni Duraku et al., 2023). Experimental studies have also confirmed that mindfulness-based interventions significantly improve students' emotional regulation and academic resilience (Özcan, 2022). Moreover, mindfulness contributes to improved executive functioning and cognitive performance in academic tasks (Zuo & Wang, 2023).

Emotional intelligence (EI) is another critical predictor of self-efficacy. Defined as the ability to recognize, understand, and manage one's emotions and those of others (Goleman, 2020; Nasution et al., 2023), emotional intelligence enhances motivation, learning independence, and interpersonal effectiveness. Kadek (2024), highlights the strong correlation between emotional intelligence and students' self-efficacy. Oparaugo & Ebenebe (2021), found that emotional intelligence facilitates more effective emotional regulation, enabling students to manage academic challenges more confidently. Similarly, Wang & Wang (2022), showed that EI can reduce academic anxiety, which often serves as a barrier to achievement.

Recent studies have also revealed an interrelated dynamic between mindfulness and emotional intelligence. Martínez-Pérez et al. (2023), reported that mindfulness training enhances emotional intelligence and reduces anxiety, thereby strengthening self-efficacy. Wahyuni et al. (2024), confirmed that mindfulness and self-efficacy contribute to students' emotional regulation, a key factor in academic success. Fan & Cui (2024), demonstrated that mindfulness and self-efficacy independently predict the psychological well-being of English language learners in China. In line with these findings, mindfulness-based school programs have positively impacted emotional health and academic performance (Vidal-Meliá et al., 2022; McBride & Greeson, 2023).

Several intervention studies further validate the importance of developing emotional intelligence and mindfulness as integrated strategies. Emotional intelligence training programs have improved students' capacity for emotion regulation, resilience, and academic persistence (Oparaugo & Ebenebe, 2021). These results suggest that strengthening both

constructs can synergistically affect self-efficacy development, especially among high school students (Frank et al., 2021).

Despite the growing literature on mindfulness and emotional intelligence, empirical studies examining their combined predictive power on self-efficacy in Indonesian high schools remain limited. Most existing research focuses on university populations or early childhood education, with few addressing high school students, particularly within culturally specific contexts like Buddhist-based schools (MacCann et al. (2019). Moreover, many studies have yet to explore how these constructs interact under the pressures of the Indonesian educational environment, where students face significant academic expectations, social dynamics, and mental health concerns (Pascoe et al., 2020).

Previous research by Caballero et al. (2019), confirmed that mindfulness supports academic achievement but did not examine its link to self-efficacy. Wahyuni et al. (2024), studied the effects of mindfulness and self-efficacy on emotional regulation but excluded emotional intelligence as a variable. Fan & Cui (2024), focused on psychological well-being but did not assess the interaction between mindfulness and emotional intelligence. Martínez-Pérez et al. (2023), found correlations between the three constructs in university students, but their applicability to younger populations remains untested. These findings reveal a significant research gap in integrating mindfulness and emotional intelligence as joint predictors of self-efficacy among high school students in Indonesia.

This study addresses this gap by examining how mindfulness and emotional intelligence influence self-efficacy in students at *Bodhicitta* Buddhist High School in Medan. Furthermore, the study contributes to educational frameworks that advocate for a broader understanding of student success—not merely as academic achievement measured by grades but as holistic development encompassing emotional balance and confidence in learning.

Research Method

This study used a quantitative correlational design to explore the relationship between mindfulness, emotional intelligence, and self-efficacy among 68 grade XI science students at Bodhicitta Buddhist High School Medan selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected using validated and reliable self-report questionnaires: the Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ), the Emotional Intelligence Scale based on Goleman's model, and the General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSES).

Statistical analyses confirmed that all instruments were valid and reliable, with Cronbach's Alpha values above the acceptable threshold (Mindfulness = 0.889, Emotional Intelligence = 0.923, and Self-Efficacy = 0.905). Further tests for normality, linearity, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity indicated that the data met the necessary assumptions for regression analysis, allowing for a robust examination of the research hypotheses.

Results and Discussion

In order to evaluate the viability of the regression model in this study, the F test was conducted. The analysis results indicate that the obtained significance value (Sig.) is 0.000, less than 0.05. According to the established criteria for assessing statistical significance, the model is deemed feasible for further analysis if the Sig. <0.05, the regression model is feasible and can be employed for further analysis. The regression model in this study, incorporating the independent variables of Mindfulness and Emotional Intelligence on the dependent variable Self-Efficacy, was found to be statistically significant. This finding indicates that Mindfulness and Emotional Intelligence variables significantly influence Self-Efficacy in students of Bodhicitta Buddhist High School Medan.

The t-test was conducted to determine the effect of each independent variable (i.e., Mindfulness and Emotional Intelligence) on the dependent variable (Self-Efficacy) in part. The t-test outcomes demonstrate that the Mindfulness variable has a value of t = 1.864 with a significance of p = 0.067 (> 0.05), indicating that Mindfulness has no significant effect on Self-Efficacy. This finding suggests that the level of Mindfulness and focused attention exhibited by students does not directly contribute to increased confidence in completing academic tasks. Conversely, the Emotional Intelligence variable demonstrated a t value of 4.943 with a significance level of p = 0.000, indicating a substantial impact of Emotional Intelligence on Self-Efficacy. This finding suggests that students with a higher capacity for emotion recognition, understanding, and management exhibit increased confidence in confronting academic and social challenges. Consequently, the t-test outcomes in this study suggest that although Mindfulness correlates with Self-Efficacy, its impact is insufficient in the regression model. Conversely, emotional intelligence substantially influences enhancing students' self-efficacy at Bodhicitta Buddhist High School in Medan.

The multiple linear regression test is utilized to analyze the effect of the independent variables, namely Mindfulness (X_1) and Emotional Intelligence (X_2), on the dependent variable, self-efficacy (Y). The Multiple Linear Regression test results are presented in Table 1 below:

Table 1. Multiple Linear Regression Test Results

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.793	0.628	0.617	5.58964

As demonstrated in Table 1, the R-value of 0.793 indicates a strong relationship between the Mindfulness and Emotional Intelligence variables and the Self-Efficacy variable. Furthermore, the R Square value of 0.628 indicates that 62.8% of the variability in Self-Efficacy can be attributed to the two independent variables (Mindfulness and Emotional Intelligence). In comparison, the remaining 37.2% is influenced by factors external to the research model. Additionally, the Adjusted R Square value of 0.617 signifies that this regression model has been adjusted to the number of predictor variables employed, affirming its notable capacity to elucidate variations in the Self-Efficacy of *Bodhicitta* Buddhist High School Medan students.

The Correlation test was conducted to determine the relationship between the independent variables (Mindfulness and Emotional Intelligence) and the dependent variable (Self-Efficacy). The results of the Pearson Correlation analysis are shown in Table 2 below:

Table 2. Pearson Correlation Test Results

Variable	Self-Efficacy	Emotional Intelligence	Sig. (2-tailed)	Interpretation
Mindfulness	0.659	0.720	0.000	Strong correlation, significant
Emotional Intelligence	0.780		0.000	Strong correlation, significant

Based on Table 2, the analysis results show that the Mindfulness variable has a Pearson correlation value of 0.659 with Self-Efficacy, which is in the range of 0.60-0.79, so it can be categorized as a strong correlation. In addition, the significance value (Sig. 2-tailed) of 0.000 <0.05 indicates this relationship is significant.

Meanwhile, the Emotional Intelligence variable demonstrated a Pearson correlation value of 0.780 on Self-Efficacy, thus indicating a strong correlation. The significance value of 0.000 <0.05 confirms that the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Self-Efficacy is significant. Consequently, a strong and significant positive relationship exists

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between Mindfulness and Emotional Intelligence in the Self-Efficacy of Bodhicitta Buddhist High School Medan students.

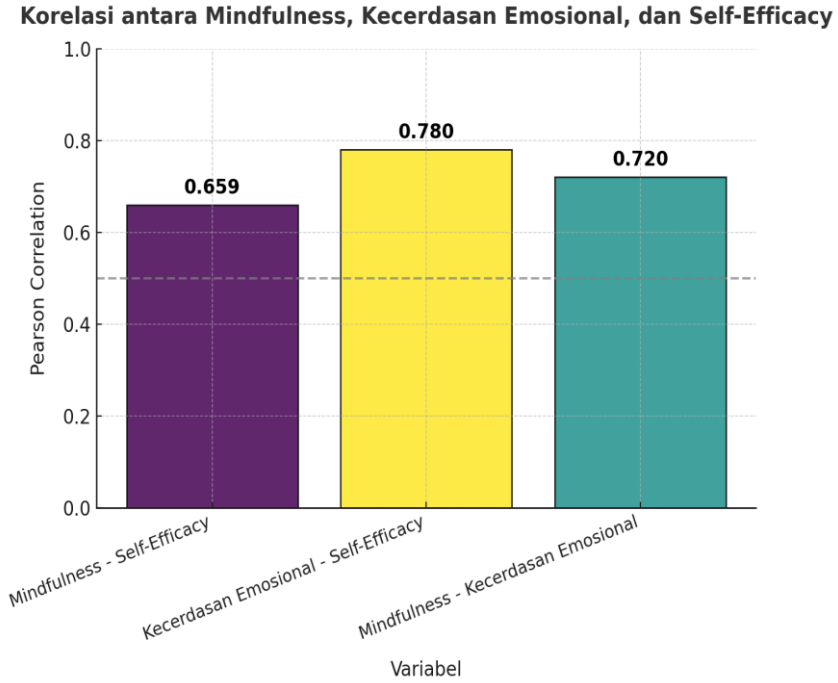

Diagram 1. Pearson Correlation Results in Clustered Column Chart

According to diagram 1, the Pearson correlation coefficient (r) measures the strength and direction of the relationship between the independent variables (Mindfulness and Emotional Intelligence) and the dependent variable (Self-Efficacy). The correlation of 0.659 (Mindfulness vs. Self-Efficacy) shows a reasonably strong relationship but is insignificant in the regression model ($p = 0.067$). This means that even though there is a relationship, mindfulness may not significantly affect self-efficacy. The correlation of 0.780 (Emotional Intelligence vs. Self-Efficacy) shows a strong and significant relationship ($p < 0.05$), confirming that emotional intelligence has a more significant impact on self-efficacy than mindfulness. The correlation of 0.720 (Mindfulness vs. Emotional Intelligence) shows a strong and significant relationship ($p < 0.05$), confirming that mindfulness has a more significant impact on emotional intelligence than self-efficacy.

Diagram 2. Scatter Plot: Mindfulness vs. Self-Efficacy

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Diagram 2 describes the scatter plot Mindfulness vs. Self-Efficacy, which shows the relationship between mindfulness scores and self-efficacy, with a firm but non-significant correlation in the regression model. This suggests a relationship between mindfulness and self-efficacy, but mindfulness may not directly affect self-efficacy without other contributing factors.

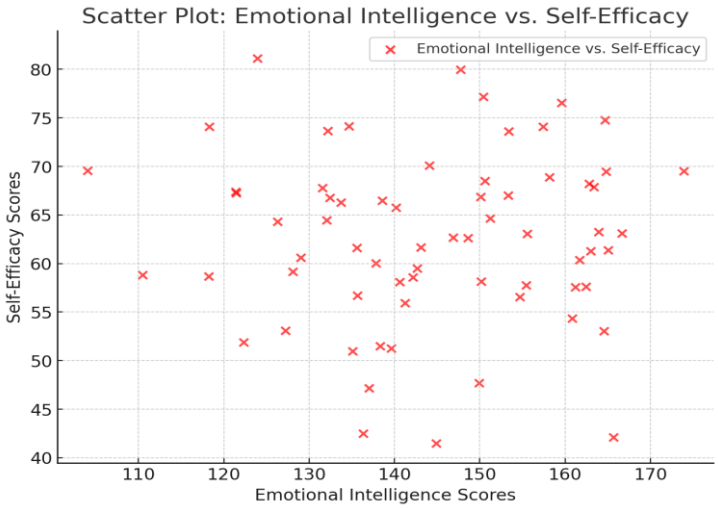

Diagram 3. Scatter Plot: Emotional Intelligence vs. Self-Efficacy

Diagram 3 describes the scatter plot Emotional Intelligence vs. Self-Efficacy shows the relationship between emotional intelligence scores and self-efficacy, with a stronger and more significant correlation in the regression model.

The Effect Size test measures the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable in the regression model. In this study, the effect size was calculated using Cohen's f² using the following formula:

$$f^2 = \frac{R^2}{1 - R^2}$$

Based on the results of multiple linear regression, the value of $R^2 = 0.628$ and Adjusted $R^2 = 0.617$. Thus, the Effect Size calculation using Cohen's f² is:

$$f^2 = \frac{0,628}{1 - 0,628}$$

$$f^2 = \frac{0,628}{0,372}$$

$$f^2 = 1,688$$

According to Cohen's (1988) interpretation guidelines, the f² value is categorized as follows: small effect size ($f^2 = 0.02$), medium effect size ($f^2 = 0.15$), large effect size ($f^2 = 0.35$), and very large effect size ($f^2 > 1.00$).

The calculation results yielded $f^2 = 1.688$, indicating that the effect of the Mindfulness and Emotional Intelligence variables on Self-Efficacy falls within the substantial effect size category. This finding suggests that the independent variables in this research model substantially contribute to explaining the variation of Self-Efficacy among students of Bodhicitta Buddhist High School Medan. Furthermore, the Adjusted R^2 value of 0.617 signifies that, following adjustment for the number of predictors in the model, 61.7% of Self-Efficacy variability can be attributed to Mindfulness and Emotional Intelligence, with the

residual 38.3% being attributable to other variables outside the scope of this research model. Consequently, the Effect Size assessment outcomes demonstrate that the regression model employed in this study exerts a considerably robust and substantial influence on the Self-Efficacy variable, thereby substantiating its utilization as a foundation for deriving more precise scientific inferences.

Discussion

The results of this study reveal that emotional intelligence exerts a more substantial impact on self-efficacy than mindfulness. This can be attributed to the fact that self-efficacy is heavily shaped by an individual's ability to regulate emotions, cope with challenges, and maintain motivation (Bandura, 1997). Emotional intelligence, which encompasses self-awareness, self-regulation, and social adaptability, directly facilitates these cognitive and emotional functions, making it a critical determinant of self-efficacy (Goleman, 2020).

In contrast, mindfulness primarily serves as a mechanism for enhancing emotional regulation and reducing stress rather than instilling confidence in one's ability to accomplish academic tasks (Özcan, 2022). While mindfulness fosters more excellent emotional stability, it does not inherently lead to stronger self-efficacy unless paired with goal-directed strategies such as self-regulation and structured interventions (Martínez-Pérez et al., 2023).

Several studies corroborate the notion that emotional intelligence is a more dominant predictor of self-efficacy than mindfulness: (1) Kushwaha et al. (2024), found that students with high emotional intelligence were more resilient in achieving academic goals, whereas mindfulness primarily served as a stress management tool; (2) Martínez-Pérez et al. (2023), demonstrated that mindfulness alone had minimal impact on self-efficacy. However, when combined with emotional intelligence training, students displayed notable improvements in academic confidence and persistence; (3) Fan & Cui (2024), found that emotional intelligence was more closely linked to academic motivation and problem-solving than mindfulness, which played a more significant role in stress reduction and emotional regulation; (4) Zuo & Wang (2023), highlighted that self-efficacy was most effectively enhanced when emotional intelligence was developed alongside goal-setting strategies. Their study emphasized that emotional resilience, a core component of emotional intelligence, is directly associated with increased self-efficacy.

These studies align with the present findings, reinforcing the argument that self-efficacy is primarily driven by an individual's ability to regulate emotions, maintain motivation, and set goals rather than merely practicing mindfulness.

Although mindfulness correlated significantly with self-efficacy, its direct effect in the regression model was insignificant ($p = 0.067$). This result suggests that while mindfulness contributes to emotional balance, its impact on self-efficacy may require long-term and structured practice to produce substantial improvements.

Research has shown that mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs) are most effective when practiced over extended periods, incorporating daily guided meditation exercises (Liu et al., 2022). Studies such as Martínez-Pérez et al. (2023) and Khedkar & Babu NC (2023), emphasize that mindfulness primarily cultivates emotional stability and focus rather than self-confidence, explaining why its effect on self-efficacy might be less pronounced than emotional intelligence.

Several factors may explain the non-significant effect of mindfulness in this study: (1) Duration and Consistency of Mindfulness Practice: Research indicates that mindfulness-based interventions require a structured and long-term commitment to yield significant improvements in psychological outcomes, including self-efficacy (Chan et al., 2021; de Bruin

et al., 2020); (2) Application in Buddhist Education: In Buddhist learning environments, mindfulness is often emphasized as a practice of ethical conduct and emotional regulation rather than a tool to build self-confidence (Lam & Seiden, 2020). This distinction may influence how students perceive its effects on self-efficacy; (3) Interaction with Other Cognitive Strategies: Studies suggest mindfulness substantially impacts self-efficacy when integrated with resilience training (Li et al., 2023; Li & Si, 2024) or self-determination strategies (Neufeld & Malin, 2022).

Conceptually, this study reinforces Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory by confirming that internal emotional regulation central to emotional intelligence has a dominant role in shaping students' belief in their capabilities. It also supports Goleman's Emotional Intelligence Theory, indicating that competencies such as emotional awareness and resilience are crucial for academic confidence. Theoretically, mindfulness contributes as a complementary construct, enhancing emotional regulation, but requires meaningful integration with goal-oriented strategies to influence self-efficacy.

The findings suggest that educational institutions should prioritize structured emotional intelligence development as a core element of student support programs. Training that enhances students' self-awareness, emotional regulation, and interpersonal skills can directly improve academic self-efficacy. In addition, mindfulness practices should be implemented systematically and in tandem with emotional intelligence, training to foster emotional balance and cognitive readiness. This integrated approach can better prepare students to navigate academic pressures and thrive in demanding learning environments.

Conclusion

This study confirms that mindfulness and emotional intelligence significantly contribute to the self-efficacy of students at SMA Bodhicitta Medan. With an R^2 value of 0.628, these two variables collectively explain 62.8% of the variability in self-efficacy, while external factors beyond this research model influence the remaining 37.2%. The findings further emphasize that emotional intelligence predicts self-efficacy more than mindfulness. Emotional intelligence was found to have a significant impact ($p = 0.000 < 0.05$), suggesting that students with higher emotional intelligence are more confident in overcoming academic and social challenges. In contrast, the effect of mindfulness on self-efficacy was not statistically significant ($p = 0.067 > 0.05$) despite showing a moderately strong correlation ($r = 0.659$). This indicates that while mindfulness plays a role in self-efficacy, its impact may be more effective when combined with structured learning strategies or applied consistently over an extended period.

The Effect Size Test (Cohen's $f^2 = 1.688$) further supports the substantial influence of mindfulness and emotional intelligence on self-efficacy, categorizing the model's explanatory power as very large. Consequently, interventions focused on emotional intelligence development are recommended as primary strategies to enhance students' self-efficacy, while mindfulness can serve as a complementary approach when implemented systematically and sustainably.

Recommendation

This study offers valuable insights for educators and policymakers in designing effective intervention programs to enhance students' self-efficacy. The following recommendations are proposed: (1) Integrating Emotional Intelligence Training: Develop programs that improve students' self-awareness, emotion regulation, and resilience as a primary strategy to enhance self-efficacy; (2) Incorporating Mindfulness into Academic Programs: Encourage students to

practice mindfulness alongside self-regulatory and goal-setting strategies to optimize its benefits in enhancing self-efficacy; (3) Providing Specialized Training for Teachers and Counselors: Equip educators with the skills to implement emotional intelligence and mindfulness techniques in the classroom, fostering a supportive and positive learning environment.

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