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Meditation Project Flanders: the effects of meditation on teacher well-being and functioning during COVID-19

Submission date
18/10/2023

Recruitment status
No longer recruiting

Registration date
18/10/2023

Overall study status
Completed

Last Edited
04/06/2024

Condition category
Other

[_] Prospectively registered
[X] Protocol
[_] Statistical analysis plan
[X] Results
[_] Individual participant data

Plain English summary of protocol

Background and study aims
The project is part of a multidisciplinary investigation into the effects of focused attention meditation. The goal of this project is to examine how the practice of meditation affects the well-being and functioning of Flemish elementary school teachers. To investigate the effects of meditation on teacher well-being, an intervention study will be conducted, where teachers learn the focused attention meditation technique. Participants will be asked to maintain a regular meditation and will be asked to fill in multiple well-being questionnaires between January 2021 and June 2022.

Who can participate?
All teachers in all elementary schools in Flanders and Brussels can participate.

What does the study involve?
Participants are asked to organize one classroom meditation session at the beginning of every school day. The duration of the meditation session depends on the age of the pupils and varied between five and ten minutes. The teachers are tasked with guiding their pupils but were also recommended to join the pupils in meditation when the progress of their pupils allowed them to do so. Additionally, teachers are recommended to take up a regular at-home practice of 20 minutes per session. The effects of the meditation are tested using three online self-report surveys that measure different dimensions of well-being: a baseline survey in January 2021, a half-time survey in March 2021, and a post-intervention survey in June 2021. If control group participants fill out the same surveys at the same time, we can isolate the intervention effect by comparing any changes in the well-being of the two groups. The control group participants get the opportunity to learn the meditation technique once the data collection is finished.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?
Participation in the meditation intervention is free of charge or financial incentive. If the intervention proves beneficial, participants can experience increases in well-being and/or functioning. No risks of participating were identified.

Where is the study run from?
Ghent University (Belgium)

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?
September 2020 to July 2021

Who is funding the study?
The larger project is set up by four employees working in four different educational support networks as a part of their job as educational support providers, the project itself did not acquire any additional funding. The researchers are paid by Ghent University (Belgium)

Who is the main contact?
Justine Van de Velde, welinjevel_leraren@ugent.be

Contact information

Type(s)
Public, Scientific

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Additional identifiers

Protocol serial number
MPF21

Study information

Scientific Title
A non-randomized controlled trial to investigate the effects of focused attention meditation on teacher well-being and functioning during the COVID-19 pandemic in Flanders

Acronym
MPF

Study objectives
How does the practice of meditation affect the well-being and functioning of Flemish elementary school teachers?

Ethics approval required
Ethics approval not required

Ethics approval(s)
On 18/04/2021, the ethical committee of the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences of Ghent University has attested that:

“This writing concerns the research conducted by Justine Van de Velde under supervision of Katia Levecque, Martin Valcke and Lieven Annemans:

Meditatieproject Vlaanderen: effecten van meditatie op het welzijn van leerkrachten

This research was conducted under the supervision of an employee of Ghent University. Since this study is in line with the “General Ethical Protocol for Scientific Research at the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences of Ghent University”, we hereby formally confirm that ethical approval was not needed for the research conducted for the above mentioned manuscript.”

(reference number 2020/164, contact: Griet Roets, Secretary of the Ethical Committee, griet.roets@ugent.be, +32 9 264 62 93).

Primary study design
Interventional

Study design
Non-randomized controlled study with longitudinal data collection

Study type(s)
Prevention, Quality of life

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied

Wide array of occupational well-being dimensions (e.g., perceived stress, emotional exhaustion, affect, concentration, sleep, vitality, job satisfaction, self-efficacy)

Interventions

This study is part of a larger project set up by four employees working in four different educational support networks to assess the effect of an intervention encompassing daily focused attention meditation in elementary school classrooms. All teachers in all elementary schools in Flanders and Brussels can participate in the project. The participants are asked to organize one classroom meditation session at the beginning of every school day for 18 months. The duration of the meditation session depends on the age of the pupils and varies between five and ten minutes. The teachers are tasked with guiding their pupils but are also recommended to join the pupils in meditation when the progress of their pupils allows them to do so. Additionally, teachers are recommended to take up a regular at-home practice of 20 minutes per session.
In the study accompanying this project, the effect of the meditation intervention on teacher occupational well-being is tested using three online self-report surveys over the first six months of the project. To this end, an intervention condition is compared with a passive waitlist control condition. Both groups voluntarily participate in the self-report surveys, and no monetary compensation is provided to them. The waitlist control participants get the opportunity to learn the meditation technique once the data collection is completed.
Participants are not randomized into intervention or control condition. Intervention group participants self-select into the intervention by responding to a call in the regional news. Once the registration for the project is closed, the four support network employees use convenience sampling to recruit control group participants in schools that are not registered for the project.

Intervention Type

Behavioural

Primary outcome(s)

A wide array of well-being measures are used in this project. Each of these measures was administered using self-report questionnaires at baseline, 3 months, and 6 months:
1. Stress is measured using the Perceived Stress Scale
2. Emotional exhaustion and depersonalisation were measured using the Maslach Burnout Inventory
3. Affect was measured using the Positive and Negative Affect Scale
4. Concentration problems were measured by a single question of the PISA questionnaire tapping into its frequency
5. Sleep problems were measured by a single question of the PISA questionnaire tapping into its frequency
6. Musculoskeletal problems were measured by three items of the PISA questionnaire that tapped into the frequency of muscle pain, back pain, and neck pain
7. Vitality was measured using the Subjective Vitality Scale
8. Life satisfaction was measured using the Satisfaction With Life Scale
9. Meaningfulness was measured using the Meaning Of Life Scale

Key secondary outcome(s)

1. Basic psychological need satisfaction and frustration measured using the Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction and Frustration Scale at baseline, 3 months, and 6 months.
2. Care competencies measured using the Care Competencies Questionnaire at baseline, 3 months, and 6 months.

3. The frequency of meditation practice measured by a single multiple-choice item tapping into the weekly frequency of meditation since the last survey at 3 months and 6 months.
4. Experiences during meditation measured by a subscale of the Effects of Meditation Scale at 3 months and 6 months.
5. Self-efficacy regarding the meditation measured using the Self-Efficacy for Mindfulness Meditation Scale at 3 months and 6 months.
6. Prior experience with meditation measured by a single multiple-choice item at baseline
7. Experienced support from different people, measured by 6 Likert-scale items at baseline, 3 months, and 6 months.
8. Enthusiasm about teaching measured by 3 items of the LISO questionnaire at baseline, 3 months, and 6 months
9. Job satisfaction measured by 2 items of the LISO questionnaire at baseline, 3 months, and 6 months
10. Teaching self-efficacy measured by 3 items of the LISO questionnaire at baseline, 3 months, and 6 months
11. Relationships with colleagues and principal, measured by the Social Function in Relationships and Feeling of Trust subscales of the PISA questionnaire at baseline, 3 months, and 6 months
12. Mental health issues prior to the project measured using multiple-choice items tapping into: the presence of any formal diagnoses, the instance that made the diagnosis, and the amount of time the participant was on sick leave due to that diagnosis, administered at 3 months
13. Turnover intentions measured using one item tapping into the frequency during the current school year, measured at 6 months
14. Work ability, measured using one item tapping into the participant's perceived ability to continue teaching until retirement, administered at 6 months
15. Perception of the effects of meditation on student well-being and performance using multiple-choice items at 6 months.

Completion date
05/07/2021

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria
Participants must work as an elementary school teacher in Flanders or Brussels

Participant type(s)
Employee

Healthy volunteers allowed
No

Age group
Adult

Sex
All

Total final enrolment
363

Key exclusion criteria

Does not meet inclusion criteria

Date of first enrolment
09/10/2020

Date of final enrolment
31/10/2020

Locations

Countries of recruitment
Belgium

Study participating centre
Vlaams Ministerie van Onderwijs en Vorming
Koning Albert II Laan 15
Brussel
Belgium
1210

Sponsor information

Organisation
Ghent University

ROR
https://ror.org/00cv9y106

Funder(s)

Funder type
University/education

Funder Name
Universiteit Gent

Alternative Name(s)
UGent, Ghent University

Funding Body Type
Private sector organisation

Funding Body Subtype
Universities (academic only)

Location
Belgium

Results and Publications

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan
The dataset generated and analysed during the current study will be available upon request from welinjevel_leraren@ugent.be

IPD sharing plan summary
Available on request

Study outputs

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
Results article		01/11/2023	04/06/2024	Yes	No
Participant information sheet	Participant information sheet	11/11/2025	11/11/2025	No	Yes
Protocol (other)			04/06/2024	No	No