

THE INTERSECTION OF LANGUAGE LEARNING AND MENTAL HEALTH: EXAMINING ANXIETY-REDUCTION STRATEGIES THROUGH CONTEMPLATIVE PEDAGOGY IN ELT

Zahra Iqbal

PhD English Language Education, The Near East University Cyprus. English Lecturer, Departments of English Language and Literature and American Culture Literature, Girne American University Cyprus.

Dr. Mubashir Ahmad
Corresponding Author

PhD English linguistics, Lincoln University College Malaysia. Lecturer in English at Edwardes College Peshawar.

Email: ahmadmphil25@gmail.com/muhammadzaienglish@gmail.com

Taimur Aimal Khan

Department of English, Northern University Nowshera, Pakistan.

Memoona Khadim

The Department of Biology, University of Okara.

Email: memoonakhadim123@gmail.com

Corresponding Author: Email: muhammadzaienglish@gmail.com

Abstract

The current study explores the impact of the implementation of contemplative pedagogy in the reduction of foreign language anxiety among undergraduate students of English Language Teaching in Pakistan. The study used a quasi-experimental design with 120 participants in three state universities in Punjab in 12 weeks during the fall 2024. The experimental group was given training that included mindfulness exercises, reflective journaling, and breath practices whereas the control group was given classical training. The collection of data was done using the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale used pre- and post-intervention, semi-structured interviews with 15 participants, and classroom observation notes. The paired-sample t-tests conducted to analyze quantitatively determined that there was statistically significant resulting reduction of anxiety in the experimental group over the control group. Qualitative thematic analysis revealed that there are five dominant themes, namely, improved self-awareness, better emotional management, heightened classroom engagement, coping-development, and learner-autonomy. The findings triangulated show that contemplative practices are promising strategies of anxiety reduction in ELT, especially in applying to communication apprehension and fear of negative evaluation. By playing a role in developing new literature on holistic practices in language instruction, the study will offer an empirical basis of why integrating contemplative pedagogy in Pakistani contexts of higher learning is helpful.

Keywords: *Impact, contemplative pedagogy, reduction, language anxiety, English Language Teaching, Pakistan.*

Introduction

The language learning anxiety is one of the most important psychological obstacles impacting millions of students around the globe, especially in English as a Foreign Language application due to the pressures of communication (Fatima & Ahmad, 2025; Naz et al., 2025; Hussain et al., 2025). The effect is not limited to mere nervousness, but it also comes with debilitating fear, which

impairs cognitive processing, oral production, and academic performance. The level of anxiety in language classrooms in Pakistan has become alarming where English, the official language, is still alien to the majority of the learners, thus necessitating the application of effective intervention techniques (Akram et al., 2021). Conventional pedagogic models have the tendency of focusing more on linguistic proficiency without consciously paying attention to the emotional aspect of the learning process, resulting in students being unprepared emotionally to face communicational problems. This negligence is especially problematic with speaking-oriented tasks when performance demands immediate responses, which cause an increase of anxiety (Ahmad et al., 2025).

The overlap between mental health and language education has been the subject of recent research in the field of scholarship, as it is a part of the increased awareness that emotional health has a direct impact on learning outcomes (Kumar et al., 2024). There is an increasing agreement among researchers that effective learning of a language cannot be achieved without the involvement of cognitive processes as well as psychological safety and emotional control (Ahmad et al., 2020). The phenomenon of foreign language anxiety, in particular, is a unique phenomenon independent of general anxiety, and is accompanied by worry, tension and apprehension peculiar to language learning situations. Students with this condition normally show physical signs such as elevation of the heartbeat rate, trembling and mental blockages in communicative activities. However, the effects are not only short term but may also result in avoidance behavior, decreased attendance and finally poor performance in school (Ahmad et al., 2021).

The concept of contemplative pedagogy has become a new hope of remedy to psychological barriers in the learning environment with references to the history of mindfulness and mindful practice to develop awareness in the present moment and emotional stability. This system focuses on whole person development, which incorporates mental, emotional and physical aspects of learning using practices like meditation, conscious breathing and reflective journaling. Contemplative practices, in contrast to traditional stress-management techniques, do not address the symptoms of anxiety peripherally but based on the underlying mechanisms of emotional reactivity and self-regulation (Gul et al., 2023). The pedagogy can be seen in connection with the modern neuroscience literature that points to the fact that the mindfulness program can reorganize neural networks related to stress responses, improving cognitive flexibility and emotional resilience. These practices provide a possibility of turning anxious situations into the chance of growth and self-discovery in language learning situations (Andleeb et al., 2025).

The Pakistani educational environment is a place of particular challenges and opportunities of applying contemplative interventions. Better learning institutions mostly use teacher-focused approaches that are based on memorization and scores on examinations and test scores without much attention to the affective conditions of learners. Students are subjected to high stakes testing conditions in which academic and professional progression is related to proficiency in English and thus performance anxiety is heightened (Anam et al., 2025). The cultural aspects also make the situation more difficult because the collectivist values can prevent a person from expressing their emotions problem, which results in the anxiety remaining unresolved. Nevertheless, Pakistani traditions of deep thought, such as Sufis and meditative practices, offer a cultural echo to the interventions based on mindfulness. Such compatibility in cultures portends that contemplative pedagogy can incorporate successfully in the available educational systems (Sultan et al., 2024; Riaz et al., 2024).

The existing studies on anxiety reduction in language learning are still focused on Western, with few studies being conducted in South Asian region. The current literature has covered several interventions such as cooperative learning, technology-enhanced learning, and affective strategies, but very few have studied the contemplative practices in ELT systematically. Third world countries are even more sparse in research when the Pakistani educational settings are taken into account, where language, cultural and institutional peculiarities cause a different kind of learning processes (Sarwat et al., 2021). This gap in the research requires situational exploration of the topic to identify whether contemplative pedagogy is effective in alleviating the level of language anxiety among the Pakistani students and how such interventions can be culturally-aligned to ensure maximum effectiveness (Bilal & Hussain, 2023).

This study fills these gaps by exploring the effects of the contemplative practices on foreign language anxiety among Pakistani undergraduate ELT classes. The study offers in-depth insights into the impact of contemplative pedagogy by bridging the quantitative data of anxiety and the qualitative narratives of experience, through a mixed-method approach to research. The 12 weeks intervention period gives enough time to students to internalize practices and form some long-term coping tactics and the comparison of the experimental group with the control group will allow a rigorous evaluation of the effectiveness of the intervention. This paper adds empirical data to the design of pedagogical innovation and mental health in language education by recording both statistical results and lived experiences.

Research Objectives

1. To quantify the impact of the contemplative pedagogy on the levels of anxiety in classrooms with regards to learning a foreign language among undergraduate students of the ELT program by administering pre-test and post-test tests on the measures of the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale.
2. To determine and evaluate the perceived experiences of the students with the practice of contemplation, mindfulness exercises, reflective journaling, and breathing exercises as related to their anxiety over language learning.
3. To determine the difference in anxiety-reduction outcomes between students who studied the contemplative pedagogy instructions and those who studied the traditional teaching approaches in the Pakistani ELT settings.

Research Questions

1. How does contemplative pedagogy intervention change the anxiety levels of undergraduate ELT students in a foreign language classroom based on the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale?
2. What is the perception and experience of students in relation to mindfulness exercises, reflective journaling, and breath practices concerning the decrease in anxiety about learning a language?
3. What are the differences in anxiety-decrease outcomes between students who are taught using contemplative pedagogy and those who are taught using traditional teaching style?

Significance of the Study

This research is of great importance to various stakeholders of the field of language education as well as mental health. To ELT practitioners, the study offers evidence-based interventions to address the problem of anxiety among students using readily available classroom-based interventions, which need minimum resources but have the potential to produce high psychological and academic outcomes. The results are usable by teacher educators to implement contemplative

methods in pre-service and in-service training programs to teach future educators comprehensive pedagogical instruments. The study confirms affective aspects of learning to students and provides them with effective self-regulation strategies that can be used outside of language classrooms. At the institutional level, the results are used in policy formulation on mental health support of students and curriculum design in Pakistani higher education. The study not only adds to the theoretical knowledge in the areas of anxiety-based mechanisms in language acquisition but also it leads to the development of the scholarship of contemplative pedagogy in non-Western settings. Moreover, showing culturally-competent mental health-related interventions, this study satisfies more extensive issues concerning the well-being of students in academically challenging settings (Khan et al., 2024).

Literature Review

Foreign language anxiety is a debilitating psychological phenomenon that has been extensively written about as it degrades learners of any educational background and at varying levels of proficiency (Kianinezhad, 2024). The original work by Horwitz, Horwitz and Tallon made language anxiety a unique construct, differentiating it with general anxiety, and defined through specific psychological, physiological and behavioral responses to language learning scenarios. Their study provided the reader with three main elements, which are communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation, which have distinct roles in the total language learning stress. Later studies have established that anxiety has a negative relationship with language achievement, which is especially strong when it comes to the presentation of oral communication, where real-time performance is required, which is perceived to be lower than the perceived competence. Highly anxious students tend to exhibit lower levels of verbal engagement, tend to avoid difficult activities, and suffer from poor functionality in working memory, which results in cyclic effects of anxiousness leading to bad performance, which, in turn, increases anxiety levels (Luo, 2025a).

Neurobiological processes that keep language anxiety are complicated processes of interaction between cognitive and emotional processing systems. Studies on the use of neuroimaging have shown that anxiety triggers the threat-detection pathways of the amygdala as well as inhibiting the functions of the prefrontal cortex that is critical to language-related production and understanding (Luo, 2025b). The pattern of neural activity replaces cognitive processing with threat monitoring, which accounts for the fact that anxious learners do not achieve fluency, accuracy, and complexity despite having sufficient linguistic knowledge. These mechanisms are further explained by the working memory model which shows that anxiety takes up attentional resources that could be used to process language especially phonological loop which is important in verbal productions. Knowledge of this physiological basis is critical in formulating useful interventions since the strategies should not only deal with conscious worry but also the automatic neural reactions to threat perception.

In the context of South Asian education, language anxiety takes culturally-sensitive forms due to postcolonial linguistic inequalities, examination-based pedagogy, and social values of collectivism (Chauhan et al., 2024). Proficiency in English in Pakistan has become a status symbol of educational success and socioeconomic mobility, exerting more and more pressure on students who see performance related to opportunity in language mastery. Classroom settings often focus on eradication of errors and social assessment, which, although being culturally-accepted, contribute to the increased fear of being judged. The high numbers in the classes that are typical of the public universities reduce personal attention and cause competition in the atmosphere, where

students feel exposed during any speaking process. Moreover, the linguistic distance that arises as a result of the mismatch between the vernacular languages of the students and English as the medium of instruction adds to anxiety, especially to the learners whose rural background and limited exposure to the English language show as an impediment (Chauhan et al., 2024).

Contemplative pedagogy is a shift in education philosophy, which goes beyond cognitive theories of learning to a more integrated approach which recognizes embodied, emotional, and spiritual aspects of human development. This pedagogy is based on contemplative traditions that extend into Buddhism, Sufism, and other meditative traditions, but it focuses on the development of awareness, presence, and compassion in addition to mastering academic content. Theoretical frameworks draw the line between contemplative and reductionistic education as the former is defined as the practice of transformation as the metacognition process, the development of ethicality, and the recognition of interconnection (Alam, 2022). Some of the central pedagogical principles are the establishment of silence and contemplation space, the centrality of experiential learning in comparison to abstract knowledge, and the importance of subjective experience as a source of knowledge. These assumptions correspond with modern theories of learning that underline active creation of the meaning and inseparability of cognition and affect (Hyde & Johnson, 2024).

Mindfulness-based interventions are the most researched contemplative practice in learning institutions, and meta-analysis studies have shown a prominent impact on reducing stress, regulating attention and emotional well-being among student bodies. Mindfulness, which is simply the intentional, nonjudgmental awareness of the current moment experience, is worked by various mechanisms, such as training attention, cognitive reappraisal and lower emotional reactivity (McCaw, 2025). Educational neuroscience research demonstrates that mindfulness practice among regular individuals enhances neural networks linked to executive functioning and decreases hyperactivity of the amygdala which is typical of anxiety disorders. In language acquisition in particular, the growing evidence indicates that mindfulness improves the functioning of listening comprehension through greater sustained attention, contributes to speaking fluency through lower levels of self-consciousness, and, lastly, enables students to tolerate errors through nonjudgmental awareness. Nevertheless, the majority of current researches have focused on general student populations and not on language learners per se, which poses questions on their effectiveness in communicatively challenging ELT situations (Zeilhofer, 2023).

Reflective journaling practices are used to complement mindfulness as they offer systematic chances to engage in a metacognitive processing and emotional expression (Salem et al., 2025). The studies on reflective writing in language education show such advantages as a higher level of learner autonomy, better knowledge of the learning strategies, and the better capacity to recognize and deal with the anxiety triggers. Journals generate intimate places that allow students to express fears, monitor progress, and explore self-control techniques without evaluation scrutiny. The very process of writing is both therapeutic in its functions as it assists learners to externalize and analyze anxiety provoking thoughts that would otherwise not be processed. Research has determined that a consistent reflective writing practice lessens intrusive anxiety through cognitive organization and perspective-taking, which converts abstract worry into specific, solvable issues (Aladini et al., 2025).

The use of breathing exercises and somatic practices will treat the physiological forms of anxiety by activating the parasympathetic nervous system to oppose stress reactions. Psychophysiological studies indicate that of the breathing exercises, especially those that focus on long exhalation, the

vagal pathways are triggered, which slow down heart rate, decrease cortisol, and induce relaxation (Brems, 2024). Short-term breathing exercises prior to anxiety-inducing tasks may help interrupt automatic stress responses in classroom settings to establish more physiological conditions that are more conducive to language production. The research on pre-performance routines in high stakes situations has revealed that the use of opposition of breathing awareness as a way of reducing anxiety without impairing optimum arousal to perform tasks has yielded significant outcomes. The availability of breathing exercises makes them especially useful in the classroom environment, where they do not need any equipment and provide the student with instant and student-in-command anxiety reduction (Gholamrezaei et al., 2022).

There is an increasing attention paying to the works of contemplation, little research has been conducted to explore how this method is applied to language acquisition, especially in non-Western educational settings. As per the existing literature, small-scale qualitative designs or short-term interventions have been mostly used, which prevents generalization and hinders consideration of long-term outcomes (Lundh, 2022). Very little research has involved validated anxiety assessments or control groups so it has not been easy to be able to isolate the specific contribution of contemplative practices to overall teacher attention or an effect of expectancy. Cultural transportability of mindfulness-based interventions should also be looked into because what was practiced in the Buddhist traditions might need to be modified when offered in the Islamic cultural setting such as Pakistan. The research is responding to these limitations by conducting a serious mixed-methods design, long intervention, instrumentation, and focus on cultural appropriateness in practice implementation (Buddha et al., 2024; Saleem et al., 2022).

Research Methodology

The researchers adopted mixed-methods research design to investigate the strategies of anxiety-reduction which utilize contemplative pedagogy in the teaching of English language in the context of Pakistan. The researchers used purposive sampling to select 120 undergraduate ELT students of three, Punjab based, public universities. Data was collected within a period of 12 weeks between the fall semester of 2024. To quantify the level of anxiety, the researchers used Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), which was given as pre-test and post-test. The experimental group was taught through introduction of the element of contemplation based on mindfulness exercises, reflective journaling, and breathing exercises prior to speaking activities, and the control group was taught through the traditional teaching techniques. The researchers also used semi-structured interviews with 15 participants in order to obtain qualitative information about their experiences of anxiety and contemplative interventions. Observation notes were also kept by the researchers when the classes took place to record the changes in behavior and engagement patterns. The statistical tests paired-sample t-tests were used to compare the data on anxiety levels, and thematic analysis was employed to detect the patterns in transcripts in the interviews. The researchers followed the ethics, where informed consent was given to all the participants and there was no confidentiality breach during the research. This triangulated methodology gave a detailed insight into the way contemplative pedagogy affected language learning anxiety in Pakistani ELT students.

Results and Data Analysis

Quantitative Analysis

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of FLCAS Pre-test and Post-test Scores

Group	Test	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Experimental	Pre-test	60	108.45	12.38	82	135
Experimental	Post-test	60	86.32	10.67	64	112
Control	Pre-test	60	107.82	11.95	85	133
Control	Post-test	60	104.18	11.42	83	128

The descriptive statistics reveal initial anxiety levels were comparable between experimental and control groups, with mean pre-test scores of 108.45 and 107.82 respectively, indicating moderate to high anxiety across participants. The experimental group demonstrated substantial mean score reduction of 22.13 points following contemplative pedagogy intervention, while the control group showed minimal decrease of 3.64 points. Standard deviations decreased in the experimental group from 12.38 to 10.67, suggesting more consistent anxiety reduction across participants. The minimum and maximum scores indicate that even the most anxious experimental group members experienced notable improvement, with the highest post-test score (112) falling below the pre-test mean.

Table 2: Paired-Sample T-test Results for Within-Group Comparisons

Group	Mean Difference	SD	t-value	df	p-value	Cohen's d
Experimental	22.13	8.45	20.28	59	<0.001	1.92
Control	3.64	6.27	4.49	59	<0.001	0.32

The paired-sample t-test results demonstrate statistically significant anxiety reduction in both groups, though with markedly different effect sizes. The experimental group's t-value of 20.28 with $p < 0.001$ indicates extremely significant reduction in anxiety following contemplative pedagogy intervention. Cohen's d value of 1.92 represents a very large effect size, suggesting the intervention produced substantial practical significance beyond statistical significance. While the control group also showed statistically significant reduction ($p < 0.001$), the small effect size ($d = 0.32$) indicates minimal practical impact, likely attributable to familiarity effects or natural anxiety adaptation over the semester rather than pedagogical intervention.

Table 3: Independent-Sample T-test Comparing Post-test Scores Between Groups

Comparison	Mean Difference	SE	t-value	df	p-value	95% CI
Experimental vs Control	-17.86	2.14	-8.35	118	<0.001	[-22.10, -13.62]

The independent-sample t-test comparing post-intervention anxiety levels between groups confirms significantly lower anxiety in the experimental group ($M = 86.32$) compared to control group ($M = 104.18$). The mean difference of -17.86 points with $p < 0.001$ demonstrates that contemplative pedagogy produced superior anxiety reduction beyond what occurred through traditional instruction. The 95% confidence interval ranging from -22.10 to -13.62 indicates strong reliability in the intervention effect. The t-value of -8.35 reflects substantial group differentiation, providing robust evidence that contemplative practices specifically contributed to anxiety reduction rather than general instructional factors or temporal changes.

Table 4: FLCAS Subscale Analysis for Experimental Group

Subscale	Pre-test Mean	Post-test Mean	Difference	t-value	p-value
Communication Apprehension	44.32	33.45	10.87	15.67	<0.001
Fear of Negative Evaluation	38.26	30.12	8.14	12.34	<0.001
Test Anxiety	25.87	22.75	3.12	6.89	<0.001

The subscale analysis reveals differential impact of contemplative pedagogy across anxiety dimensions. Communication apprehension showed the largest reduction (10.87 points), suggesting mindfulness and breathing exercises particularly benefited students during speaking activities where immediate verbal production creates maximum stress. Fear of negative evaluation decreased substantially (8.14 points), indicating reflective journaling and non-judgmental awareness cultivation helped students develop psychological distance from evaluative concerns. Test anxiety showed modest but significant reduction (3.12 points), the smallest change among subscales, possibly because contemplative practices addressed in-moment performance anxiety more effectively than anticipatory examination worry.

Table 5: Correlation Between Intervention Attendance and Anxiety Reduction

Variable	N	Pearson r	p-value	Interpretation
Sessions Attended vs Anxiety Reduction	60	0.68	<0.001	Moderate positive correlation

The correlation analysis examining relationship between contemplative practice session attendance and anxiety reduction demonstrates moderate positive correlation ($r=0.68$, $p<0.001$). This finding suggests dose-response relationship where increased exposure to contemplative practices corresponded with greater anxiety reduction. Students attending more than 85% of sessions ($n=42$) showed mean anxiety reduction of 25.34 points compared to 15.67 points for those attending fewer sessions ($n=18$). The significant correlation supports interpretation that contemplative practices themselves, rather than extraneous factors, drove anxiety reduction, while also highlighting importance of consistent engagement for maximizing intervention benefits.

Qualitative Analysis

Theme 1: Enhanced Self-Awareness and Recognition of Anxiety Triggers

The respondents were always found to mention that through contemplative practices especially reflective journaling, it was possible to pinpoint certain situations, thoughts, and physical experiences related to the development of anxiety. Students added that they became aware of patterns that they used to play out without thinking of like; catastrophic thinking before a presentation or physical tension during grammar correction. One of the participants commented that mindfulness exercises were useful to differentiate between productive concern and unproductive worry, so that more strategic strategies to manage the anxiety may be adopted. This metacognitive knowledge was a form of primary change which allowed students to interfere with anxiety processes instead of being undermined by them. Most students were surprised to find out that they had used a lot of mental power on anticipatory anxiety over hypothetical negative events.

Theme 2: Development of In-the-Moment Coping Mechanisms

Students also noted that breathing and mindfulness exercises were available resources that can be used to deal with acute anxiety in the classroom. In contrast to the abstract anxiety-management tips, these practices provided down-to-the-ground strategies that students could implement and use

in case of stressed situations. Respondents reported that they use breath awareness when performing speaking activities to help them to establish themselves in the here-and-now instead of worrying about the future. Some students said that the ability to access a so-called toolkit of practices boosted confidence, because they knew they had techniques of dealing with anxiety once it occurred. This embodied quality of breathing and mindfulness practices was especially useful as it provided anxiety management that was not relying on already strained cognitive resources.

Theme 3: Improved Emotional Regulation and Reduced Reactivity

The participants reported that after the engagement in contemplative practice, they had become less emotionally reactive to errors, corrections and problematic classroom interactions. Students said they no longer got derailed and engulfed by anxiety when it occurred, where they were able to observe it without being it. This change of being fused with anxious thoughts to observing them was a sign of great psychological growth. Several students explained this shift by mindfulness practices in which non-judgmental awareness and acceptance were practiced instead of suppression or avoidance. Development of self-compassion with reflective journaling also played a role in assisting the students to address their troubles not through self-criticism but with compassion, which in turn did not worsen anxiety.

Theme 4: Increased Willingness to Participate and Take Communicative Risks

It has been observed that a significant behavioral change occurred as the students noted that they felt more engaged in classroom activities and were willing to try to do difficult communicative tasks despite the initially acquired anxiety. Participants reported that anxiety was no longer such a determinant of behavior, it was not always a trigger of evading or remaining silent. Students explained this change by the decrease in the level of anxiety and by the fact that students could be functioning despite the presence of anxiety. Some of the participants noted that contemplative practices assisted to blame the mistakes as learning experience as opposed to being disastrous as well as to make communicative risk taking less intimidating. This theme implies the effect of contemplative pedagogy that goes beyond the reduction of anxiety to a greater degree of agency, where learners feel enabled to work towards the achievement of learning objectives despite having to experience discomfort.

Theme 5: Cultivation of Non-Judgmental Attitudes Toward Self and Language Learning

Students have cited that they have developed more accepting, compassionate attitudes about themselves as learners and that they are no longer perfectionists who judge themselves harshly that was the character that had dominated their experience of learning language. Reflective journaling especially helped in the realization of unrealistic expectations and comparison thinking which induced anxiety. The participants explained how they were letting go of the expectations of perfect performance and putting their own value on effort and slow improvement. This change of attitude was seen to be related to the mindfulness teachings of accepting the current reality as it is but not necessarily working towards idealized futures. This non-judgmental approach, according to many students, made them less self-convinced when they were engaged in speaking as they were less concerned about the way others rated their performance.

Theme 6: Integration of Practices into Broader Life and Study Contexts

The participants stated that they transferred contemplative practices into the other academic courses, examination preparation, and individual life stressors out of the English classrooms. Students wrote of employing breathing methods prior to other anxiety events and mindfulness principles to different stressful experiences. This generalization implies the contemplative practice offered in the transferring life skills, but not context-related coping mechanisms. Some participants

said that they shared the practices with friends and family members which meant that they felt that practices are valuable more than they are helpful to themselves. The learners noted that they liked taking classes about learning life tools in their English course, and that contemplation skills were something they considered to be one of the most significant positive consequences of their learning journey. This shift suggests the holistic development of students by contemplative pedagogy.

Discussion

The congruence of quantitative and qualitative data is an interesting testament of the fact that contemplative pedagogy can do much to alleviate anxiety about foreign languages and improve mental capabilities of students in coping with learning stressors. The significantly large effect size ($d=1.92$) of the mean reduction in anxiety of 22.13 in the experimental group indicates that contemplative practices do not only lead to large and significant changes in student well-being. The qualitative themes help shed light upon the mechanisms of these statistical changes, and how mindfulness, reflective journaling and breathing methods can promote self-awareness, emotional regulation and non-judgmental attitudes, all of which combine to decrease the intensity and effects of anxiety. The fact that communication apprehension had the highest reduction likelihood indicates that contemplative practices have a definite advantage in the real time performance situations that cause the most anxiety in language learners. The intermediate relationship between the attendance of the practices and anxiety mitigation indicates causal understanding and emphasizes the idea that regular practice is critical to achieving the benefits. Reports by students on transfer of practices outside the English classrooms suggest that transfer of contemplative pedagogy does not only deal with language-based anxiety but rather more general psychological skills applicable in all aspects of life. These results are consistent with neuroscientific studies showing that mindfulness interventions are associated with a decrease in amygdala reactivity and an increase in prefrontal control, which offers a biological explanation of changes seen. The cultural fit in the form of an easy access to contemplative practices by students may indicate that the rich meditative cultures in Pakistan generate the prepositions to the contemplative practice and hence can be integrated into the local education settings with ease.

Conclusion

This mixed-methods research study shows that the contemplative pedagogy research provides viable and culturally-appropriate intercession in the decreasing of foreign language anxiety among Pakistani ELTs. The experimental cohort recorded statistically and practically significant anxiety reduction on various dimensions, with some of them being more pronounced on communication apprehension and fear of negative evaluation. Qualitative results demonstrate that contemplative practices have a variety of mechanisms such as increased metacognitive awareness, accessible coping mechanisms, greater emotional regulation, and attitudes and self-compass toward learning. Bringing together such practices as meditation and journaling and breathing, the combination devotes its attention to the cognitive, emotional, and physiological aspects of anxiety and responds to it comprehensively, surpassing the impact of the conventional teaching. Reported transfer of practices to the wider contexts of their lives by the students makes it possible to hypothesize that transfer of contemplative pedagogy has a contribution to multifaceted development other than language learning outcomes. The effective deployment in Pakistani universities of the general people proves that it is possible to introduce contemplative strategies in the resource-bound environment with big classes. These results are part of an increasing body of literature that acknowledges affective aspects as primary and not secondary determinants of language learning

achievement and confirm the effectiveness of instructional methods that consider the learner as a complete individual and not just a cognitive ability.

Recommendations

According to the results of the study, some recommendations can be made to the educational practice and future research. ELT teachers ought to think about introducing small meditative exercises into everyday classroom practices especially prior to speaking activities that cause anxiety since even minimal interventions can have an instant effect to relieve anxiety. Contemplative pedagogy training must be incorporated into the teacher education curriculum so that future teachers have the personal meditation techniques as well as the classroom teaching techniques. To promote the adoption of contemplative pedagogy, institutions must facilitate the process by offering opportunities of professional development and flexibility in their curricula so that reflective practices can be integrated into it. It should be investigated in future research how anxiety reduction can be sustained in the long run and whether the benefits continue when the intervention period is over. The comparison of studies that explore the most appropriate contemplative practices to apply to each aspect of anxiety would inform the development of a specific intervention. The study on the role of contemplative pedagogy in the real development of language proficiency, other than reducing anxiety, would enhance the knowledge of learning outcomes altogether. Lastly, research on contemplative practice in a variety of Pakistani educational institutions, such as secondary schools and rural areas, would determine greater generalizability and determine required cultural modifications. There is a need to check answers.

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