Durham E-Theses

Exploring Educators' Perceptions of Implementing Mindfulness Interventions with Students Transitioning from Primary to Secondary School in an Intercultural Context

JAMES, HARRISON,JOHNSON

Exploring Educators' Perceptions of Implementing Mindfulness Interventions with Students Transitioning from Primary to Secondary School in an Intercultural Context

Harrison James

Doctorate in Education (EdD)

University of Durham

Table of Contents

Declaration

I declare that this thesis was composed by myself, that the work contained herein is my own except where explicitly stated otherwise in the text, and that this work has not been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification.

Copyright Statement

Abstract

This thesis explores educators' perceptions of implementing mindfulness interventions to support Third Culture Kids (TCKs) transitioning from primary to secondary international schools within intercultural contexts. International schools, characterised by diverse student bodies, present challenges during educational transitions, especially for TCKs—young people raised in cultures different from their parents', leading to distinct hybrid identities (Pollock & Van Reken, 2009). The transition to secondary school significantly increases academic demands and socio-emotional pressures, often amplifying difficulties for TCKs, such as anxiety, cultural dislocation, and relationship-building challenges (Van Der Kleij et al., 2023; Xu & Jin, 2022).

Literature suggests mindfulness—defined as paying purposeful, non-judgemental attention to the present moment—can effectively support emotional resilience and reduce stress among students (Zhu et al., 2021; Matiz et al., 2020). However, implementing mindfulness within educational settings is complex, influenced heavily by cultural contexts, age groups, and school resources (Peacock, 2014; Emerson et al., 2020).

A qualitative, interpretivist case-study methodology was chosen, focusing on educators from various international schools located in Asia, South America, and Europe. Semi-structured interviews enabled an in-depth exploration of educators' personal reflections and experiences regarding the effectiveness and challenges of mindfulness practices. Interview data was analysed thematically, highlighting the contextual factors influencing mindfulness interventions, thus providing detailed insights into educators' experiences and perceptions (Gomm et al., 2000; Yin, 2003).

The findings strongly indicated mindfulness interventions offer substantial benefits for TCKs. Educators reported noticeable improvements in students' emotional regulation, resilience, and overall well being. These interventions particularly helped manage anxiety, improve classroom behaviour, and facilitate better relationships among peers and staff—outcomes aligning closely with existing literature (Zhu et al., 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic

heightened these benefits by increasing the need for effective socio-emotional support, positioning mindfulness as particularly valuable during times of global crisis and uncertainty (Matiz et al., 2020; Nyari, 2021).

Nevertheless, successful mindfulness implementation was not uniform across contexts. Cultural alignment emerged as critical; in regions where mindfulness aligned closely with cultural norms around mental health and wellbeing, acceptance and effectiveness were notably higher. Conversely, differing cultural attitudes, particularly around mental health stigma and notions of masculinity, presented barriers, necessitating careful cultural adaptation of mindfulness practices (Ainsworth et al., 2023). Age sensitivity also significantly influenced receptivity, with younger students often being more responsive than older ones, highlighting the importance of adapting mindfulness programmes to different developmental stages (Burke, 2010; Rempel, 2012).

Additionally, professional development for teachers and sufficient school resources emerged as pivotal to successful and sustainable mindfulness interventions. Schools investing consistently in comprehensive educator training and dedicated programme resources experienced more positive outcomes, underlining the practical requirements for effectively embedding mindfulness in schools (Montero-Marin et al., 2021; Wilde et al., 2019).

In conclusion, this research indicates mindfulness interventions, when carefully adapted to cultural and developmental contexts and supported by adequate training and resources, represent effective approaches for aiding TCKs' transition from primary to secondary school. These findings contribute valuable insights to intercultural education research, emphasising mindfulness's potential in enhancing student wellbeing during transitions. Further studies should examine mindfulness's long-term impacts across diverse cultural settings, particularly in ongoing global crises.

1. <u>Introduction</u>

1.1 Researcher's Context and Background

This thesis explores the experiences and perceptions of educators who have implemented mindfulness interventions with students transitioning from primary to secondary school within an intercultural context, particularly regarding their perceived impact on Third Culture Kids (TCKs). My personal experiences have shaped the development of this research, allowing me to explore the challenges and perspectives inherent in such diverse educational environments, potentially offering new understandings that could be of value.

Regarding my personal experiences, I attended school as the only Black Caribbean student among mostly White British students. Spending a significant amount of time visiting and also living in the Caribbean as a child, I observed distinct cultural differences when socialising with British children. This necessitated a transition period during which I had to adjust my social approach to establish and maintain relationships with my peers.

However, once I did adapt I never considered the challenge further. Later in my life I began to teach mathematics at an international school in China. The transition to a new country and workplace had a number of challenges, one of which was the adaptation to a new language and culture. This added to the social challenges from leaving friends and family behind in London whilst trying to develop new friendships in an unfamiliar environment. I was therefore reminded of the difficulties I had experienced as a young man and child. I noticed during my time there that the students arriving at the school would sometimes struggle to transition smoothly for arguably similar reasons and with greater difficulty than in past schools I had worked at in the UK. Students typically transitioned from a local private Chinese school, characterised by a distinctly Chinese cultural environment, to our British-style international school with predominantly Western teachers preparing them for Western universities. From what I could see this was a somewhat challenging adaptation to make.

Nevertheless, these Chinese students did not become the focus as I observed another group of students who appeared to face additional challenges. In a secondary international

school like the one I worked in, a TCK is a student who has lived in multiple countries, experiencing diverse cultural environments, often because their parents are expatriates, diplomats or international business professionals. I noticed that these students develop a cultural identity distinct from their parents' home culture and the cultures they live in.

Specifically, at the international school in China, where the teachers and events are Western in nature, a Third Culture Kid (TCK) had to adapt to both the school's Western-oriented culture and the local Chinese culture of their peers, which presented several challenges. I witnessed issues regarding cultural identity confusion, navigating language barriers between English and Chinese and difficulties in social integration due to differing social norms and interests. Additionally, TCKs face academic pressure from adapting to different teaching approaches and high standards, managing varying cultural expectations from school and home, and adjusting to diverse social environments. These experiences can impact their emotional well-being, requiring them to develop strong adaptability, resilience and intercultural communication skills to thrive.

Whilst I was working at this international school the senior leadership team implemented a form of meditation with the year 7s (the first academic year of the school). They suggested it was because the year was particularly poor with respect to disruptive behaviour. Later that year both the teachers and the senior leadership team stated that (from their perception) it had worked wonders and continued the programme. Yet, I became interested in the intervention mainly due to the fact that I would see hundreds of individuals meditating in the morning on my way to work and in the evenings almost every single day without fail for the three years I was there - something I had never seen before. I was told that the form of meditation implemented at the school was called mindfulness and that it particularly aided in improving the behaviour and the relationships between the students. Moreover, many staff had got involved in this habit and described it as an excellent way to feel at one with the community, reduce stress and so it became recommended for new staff. In the third year I was there I began to participate, found it challenging, but noticed it had personally made my location in China feel for the first time like a home. For all of these reasons, I began researching the influence of mindfulness before I had considered focusing on transition.

4

Following my post in China, I went to Kazakhstan, which (of course) had another completely new language and culture. I noticed a similar theme early on at this school (a larger school that had a primary and secondary school in one) as local Kazakh students would enter the school and find the transition challenging. I had once again become interested in primary to secondary transition. Furthermore, it was part of my role as the deputy head of both the primary and secondary school and, in time, parents began to bring it to my attention in a manner that could not be ignored. From my experience, primary to secondary transition was - and is - a consistent challenge to young people. There were other issues or problems of a similar magnitude of interest in my career - yet it did consistently feel overlooked, hence the parents coming forward.

Also, my previous school in China viewed the issue with the year 7s as a behavioural problem due to the particular sample of students that year, yet continually described the subsequent year 7s as challenging pastorally. Moreover, at present, I am the head teacher of a school in Latin America and it is and has been an evident issue, although it was not originally part of the school development plan. That is, students at the international schools I worked in that were transitioning from primary into secondary would noticeably find the transition challenging, yet the senior leadership teams would not specifically recognise it as due to the challenge of transition. Furthermore, as a member of a senior leadership team in international schools throughout this research, I was particularly interested in the perspectives of staff. In my experience, the success of any intervention is contingent upon seriously considering these perspectives.

It was in Kazakhstan that my focus truly narrowed. It appeared that the students from expatriate families - students who had lived and studied in a country different from their own due to their parents' work assignments abroad - were being somewhat overlooked, especially when considering the feedback obtained regarding their transition into secondary school. For example, their parents (in all three regions mentioned) would often state that academically their children were prepared but pastorally inadequately so. The parents of the students attending the international school in Kazakhstan would state that their children

would feel unsettled emotionally months into the year, struggle to establish themselves within friendship groups and claim often that they missed their past friends. This had been seen in some local students - but not to the same magnitude, in my opinion. The majority of parents that made such statements worked for embassies or were expats working for an international corporation. The students were often referred to as, 'embassy kids', regardless. Later in Kazakhstan, 'embassy kids', in year 12 (transitioning from a different secondary school to 6th-form college) described similar challenges due to the workload, different teachers, new students, loss of friends and so forth. The majority of these older students would call themselves third culture kids, a term I had not used before, that encompassed those year 7 students I mentioned earlier whose parents worked for embassies or international businesses.

Working in international schools, I have observed that Third Culture Kids (TCKs) often face significant struggles. As a TCK myself, having experienced a home culture different from that of my school peers, I am particularly attuned to these challenges. Unlike my upbringing, intercultural contexts in these schools may include a separate culture between the peers and the school, which I judge to be tougher and more intense than my own experience. Adaptation for TCKs typically involves adjusting to both the host culture and the culture of the school, rather than the environment adapting to the student. This process can be challenging, potentially leading to feelings of cultural imposition and additional difficulties for TCKs in international school settings. Intercultural contexts, in my experience, are not only where TCKs may reside but are also where TCKs encounter the greatest difficulties. Additionally, in our global environment, crises such as economic downturns and environmental disasters are inevitable over time and can exacerbate these pre-existing challenges. Consequently, it is crucial to explore and pilot interventions in advance, researching their efficacy to prepare for such eventualities in addition to aiding students in international schools generally. Mindfulness, for instance, has shown promise in managing behaviour, based on both personal experience and observation, though it may not always align with every individual's cultural background or age. It is also essential to provide adequate resources and professional development opportunities for staff to effectively support TCKs in navigating these complexities.

From my experience it could be said that students who were going through transition in an intercultural context, wherein they are a cultural minority, could experience more difficulties. Additionally, those students that would describe themselves as having a different culture to the student body seemed to have further challenges. I began to focus on those students that can be described as third culture kids transitioning particularly from primary to secondary school rather than from year 11 to year 12. This was because the younger students appeared to have less of a voice with regards to the issue and it was a pattern of neglect I had come across in my career as an educator. In time, this developed into my case study, which seeks to explore the experiences and perceptions of those who have implemented mindfulness with students transitioning from primary to secondary in international schools in an intercultural context.

1.2 What is Explored in this Research

This thesis explores educators' perceptions of implementing mindfulness with students in an intercultural context, focusing on the transition from primary to secondary school. TCKs are students who develop a third culture due to diverse cultural experiences. These students face challenges during transitions, especially in international schools. Crises like the COVID-19 pandemic can exacerbate these challenges, highlighting the need for support mechanisms to help TCKs navigate socio-emotional and academic difficulties (Bagnall, 2012). For the purpose of this thesis, the term 'educator' is used broadly to refer to teaching staff, school leaders, and administrators involved in the planning or implementation of educational interventions, including mindfulness-based practices.

The primary objective is to explore the experiences and perceptions of teachers and administrators who have implemented mindfulness interventions in international schools. The study aims to uncover the challenges and opportunities of integrating mindfulness practices in diverse educational settings, providing insights into the contextual factors influencing these interventions among TCKs.

Mindfulness can enhance emotional regulation, resilience, and well-being. Its implementation during periods of upheaval and stress may improve students' mental health and academic outcomes. However, the effectiveness of mindfulness interventions depends on cultural subtleties, age sensitivity, professional development, and resource allocation (Gu et al., 2020).

This study offers qualitative insights from educators across four international school contexts worldwide, detailing the challenges and opportunities of integrating mindfulness into educational support for students in transition. These narratives reveal the complexities of implementing mindfulness in diverse educational contexts.

A key theme is how crises can both catalyse and hinder mindfulness interventions. The pandemic highlighted the need for mental health support, driving schools to adopt mindfulness practices to address socio-emotional issues. However, it also revealed challenges in engaging students across different cultural and age groups (Koris et al., 2021; Koralesky, 2021; Murphy et al., 2020). The success of mindfulness in curricula requires continuous investment in educator training and program development (Emerson et al., 2020; Montero-Marin et al., 2021).

The frequent cultural transitions of TCKs position them to benefit significantly from mindfulness, enhancing emotional regulation, reducing stress and anxiety, and improving relationship building. However, cultural alignment is crucial for the effectiveness of mindfulness practices, necessitating adaptive methodologies in intervention design and delivery (Bagnall, 2012).

This research is particularly significant as it addresses the gap in understanding how mindfulness interventions are perceived in the context of international schools, where transitions often present socio-emotional and academic challenges for Third Culture Kids (TCKs) (Hayden & Thompson, 2016; Grimshaw & Sears, 2008). The study is driven by the need to explore how mindfulness can serve as a structured support mechanism, aiding students in managing the psychological and social demands of moving between cultural environments (Koris et al., 2021). While mindfulness has been extensively studied in relation to well-being and stress reduction, its application in supporting students during

primary-to-secondary school transitions in intercultural settings remains underexplored (Bagnall et al., 2022). By examining the perspectives of educators, this research contributes valuable insights into how mindfulness can be effectively integrated within school structures to support transitioning students. Furthermore, as global mobility continues to shape educational experiences and the challenges of frequent transitions become more evident, this study provides timely and practical implications for enhancing mental health support in international education (Montero-Marin et al., 2021).

1.3 Theoretical Orientation

This study adopts an interpretivist methodological orientation, which may be particularly appropriate for exploring educators' perceptions, given that such perceptions are inherently subjective and shaped by personal, cultural, and institutional experiences. Interpretivism acknowledges that participants' views are contextually bound, suggesting that findings from qualitative inquiries are best understood within the specific settings in which they are studied (Yin, 2018; Simons, 2009).

Central to this research are three key concepts: mindfulness, transition, and Third Culture Kids (TCKs). Mindfulness, defined here as the purposeful, non-judgmental attention to the present moment, has been studied for its efficacy in enhancing emotional resilience and reducing stress, particularly among young people in educational settings (Zhu et al., 2021; Matiz et al., 2020). Transition refers to the critical educational and developmental stage when students move from primary to secondary school, a period marked by heightened socio-emotional and academic demands, which could be said to be particularly challenging within intercultural contexts (Bagnall et al., 2022). Third Culture Kids (TCKs) may be described as children who develop a cultural identity blending elements of their parents' cultural background with the various cultures they encounter through frequent relocations or by living in an intercultural context, such as attending international or boarding schools even within their home countries (Emenike & Plowright, 2017; Dillon, 2019). This dynamic identity formation may involve navigating complex social interactions and adapting continually to diverse cultural environments (Hayden, 2018). It was the intention that employing a

qualitative case study approach could facilitate an in-depth examination of these complex social phenomena.

1.4 Summary of Structure

This thesis begins by reviewing relevant literature, exploring international schooling, the specific challenges encountered by Third Culture Kids (TCKs), and the potential role mindfulness interventions might play in addressing these challenges, particularly in supporting socio-emotional wellbeing during the transition from primary to secondary school. The methodological framework follows, detailing an interpretivist qualitative case study approach. Semi-structured interviews with educators from diverse international school contexts form the basis of data collection, analysed thematically to identify key patterns and insights.

The thesis consists of six chapters. Chapter 2 reviews literature on international schooling, TCK challenges, school transitions, and mindfulness. Chapter 3 outlines the interpretivist case study methodology and approach to data collection and analysis. Chapter 4 presents findings thematically, reflecting educators' perceptions. Chapter 5 offers a discussion whereby findings are situated within existing research, while Chapter 6 concludes with key insights, limitations, and considered suggestions with regards to future practice and research.

Subsequently, the findings are presented, highlighting educators' perceptions of mindfulness interventions, structured around themes including the socio-emotional challenges faced by TCKs, perceived benefits such as enhanced emotional resilience and improved relationships, cultural and developmental sensitivities in implementation, and the significance of adequate professional development and resources. The discussion chapter then critically examines these findings in relation to existing literature, considering implications for educational practice with particular emphasis on cultural adaptation, age-appropriate intervention design, and effective resource allocation. Finally, the thesis concludes by summarising the main insights, acknowledging limitations, and offering recommendations for educators and researchers aiming to implement and investigate mindfulness-based interventions in international educational contexts.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The educational landscape is continuously evolving, shaped by factors such as globalisation (Pereira and Medeiros, 2023), technological advancements (Zainuddin et al., 2021) and cultural integration (Xu and Jin, 2022). One particularly intricate aspect of this evolution is the experience of Third Culture Kids (TCKs), who often move between different countries, cultures and educational systems. This thesis focuses on exploring the experiences and perceptions of educators who have implemented mindfulness interventions with students transitioning from primary to secondary school in an intercultural context. In this chapter, the literature on international schools, culture, TCK students, the transition from primary to secondary school and mindfulness will be explored, highlighting the layered challenges these students face due to their intercultural backgrounds. Additionally, the chapter will examine mindfulness interventions, motivated by their perceived success in promoting behavioural change and aiding TCKs' adaptation to new environments and cultures - a journey of exploration initiated by personal research and experiences at the beginning of this study.

Behaviours and norms, rather than inherited traits, may shape how individuals adapt to new environments. The movement of people across borders leads to interactions between different cultures, which can be enriching but also challenging, especially for children navigating new cultural environments in their educational journeys. Culture is an evolving entity grounded in social interactions across various contexts, including family, community, workplace and nation. These interactions, which encompass power dynamics, values, norms, practices and habits, shape how individuals communicate and relate to one another. Consequently, these influences create a fluid and dynamic cultural identity that only appears constant; however, this identity continually evolves with social experiences. Additionally, the importance of mindfulness interventions may have become even more pronounced due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which exacerbated feelings of uncertainty and instability. This pandemic, like other crises, highlights the necessity of exploring effective strategies to support TCKs during periods of heightened anxiety. By examining this and other potential crises, we can better understand the critical role of interventions that support mental health

during challenging times. This thesis aims to explore the perceptions and experiences of teachers and administrators who have implemented mindfulness practices with TCKs attending international schools, particularly those transitioning between primary and secondary school. The essence of culture lies in relationships, interactions and the practices and habits they produce. In times of challenge, culture manifests through adaptive behaviours that maintain group cohesion and resilience. Thus, children can develop a "third culture" - an identity emerging from the interactions between their parents' culture (potentially a blend) and the culture of their peers and school environment (Emenike & Plowright, 2017; Pollock & Van Reken, 2009; Crossman, 2021). Berry (2005) highlights that cultural adaptation involves navigating and reconciling differing norms and behaviours, presenting significant challenges for children in multicultural educational settings. Positive social interactions are critically dependent on how cultural differences are perceived and acted upon (Freeman, 1997). With increasing globalisation, the frequency of such interactions has surged, often resulting in complex social dynamics where individuals struggle to assimilate, sometimes feeling like outgroup members (Kilguss, 2008)

Cultural connection can be described as fundamental to human well-being. Social bonds are frequently rated above wealth, fame, and even physical health in contributing to happiness (Cacioppo, 2008). Conversely, social isolation and loneliness have been identified as significant risk factors for various health issues, including high blood pressure and early death. These feelings of loneliness and disconnection can be particularly pronounced among TCKs, who often face frequent relocations and cultural adjustments. Belonging to a group, facilitated by strong social categorisation, can alleviate these feelings by fostering connections within a familiar cultural framework (Fowers, 2015). Allan (2002) observed that monocultural school environments in the Netherlands negatively impacted cultural minorities, increasing feelings of isolation. Furthermore, Deveney (2005) found that Thai students may at times face challenges in Western classrooms, as they find it more difficult to engage in the active class discussions that occur within a Western cultural context.

Additionally, the importance of mindfulness interventions may have become even more pronounced due to the COVID-19 global health crisis, which exacerbated feelings of uncertainty and instability. This pandemic, like other crises, highlights the necessity of

exploring effective strategies to support TCKs during periods of heightened anxiety. By examining this and other potential crises, we can better understand the critical role of interventions that support mental health during challenging times. This thesis aims to explore the perceptions and experiences of teachers and administrators who have implemented mindfulness practices with TCKs attending international schools, particularly those transitioning between primary and secondary school.

2.2 International Schools and their Context

International schools are educational institutions that cater to students from diverse cultural and national backgrounds, often located outside their home countries. According to Hayden and Thompson (2008), these schools have seen significant growth and influence due to globalisation, serving expatriate communities as well as local students seeking international education standards. Allan (2002) highlights the cultural dissonance experienced by students in international schools, as they navigate multiple cultural identities and educational expectations. Heyward (2002) emphasises the transition from being merely international to truly intercultural, where schools actively foster intercultural understanding and competencies among students. Grimshaw and Sears (2008) explore the complex identity negotiations of international school students, who often struggle with questions of belonging and cultural identity. However, there is a distinction between operating within an intercultural context and being an intercultural school. Some schools may exist within intercultural contexts but do not fully achieve the status of intercultural schools because they do not sufficiently integrate diverse cultural perspectives. This lack of integration may create additional challenges for students from differing backgrounds, potentially complicating their sense of belonging and cultural identity. Despite these challenges, these institutions aim to provide a holistic and inclusive education that prepares students for global citizenship and intercultural competence.

Understanding the definition and role of international schools is central to this study, as these institutions often serve as transition spaces for Third Culture Kids (TCKs) and other internationally mobile students (Hayden & Thompson, 2008). Given that these schools cater to students experiencing frequent relocations and cultural adjustments, the transition from

primary to secondary school can be particularly complex in such settings (Tretheway & Vanderburg, 2022). This study focuses on how international schools facilitate these transitions and whether mindfulness-based interventions can support students in adapting to new academic and social environments. By examining the experiences of educators implementing mindfulness practices, this research seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of how international schools can enhance student well-being and intercultural adaptation during critical transition periods (Bagnall et al., 2022).

It has been suggested that 80% of the demand for international school places can come from wealthy local parents (Bunnell, 2015). Additionally, data from the Independent Schools Council (2014, cited by Lee and Wright, 2015) illustrated that 39% of students enrolled at private schools in the UK were from China and Hong Kong. Both of these groups of parents appear to wish for their children to attend a Western education institution (Lee and Wright, 2015). Consequently, the number of international schools seems to also be increasing to keep up with such demand. International Baccalaureate (IB) schools in Asia grew by 15.5% annually between 2001-2009, helping to meet the increasing demand for Western higher education (Lee and Wright, 2015).

International schools, which often serve a diverse student body, have been described as practice grounds for diversity and intercultural encounters (van Oord, 2008). These schools are increasingly in demand, often driven by wealthy local parents seeking a Western education for their children (Bunnell, 2015). The rise in international schools is particularly notable in regions like Asia, where the number of International Baccalaureate (IB) schools has grown significantly to meet this demand (Lee & Wright, 2015). These schools aim to foster an "international mindedness" identity, promoting values such as empathy, respect for different cultures, and a global perspective (Bunnell, 2019).

Morales (2015) put forward that international schools should carefully consider the transition of students to their schools as they often come from different cultures, which can make the transition period more challenging. Staff, according to Deveney (2007) do not necessarily develop cultural responsiveness during their training, but can become effective in multicultural classrooms with a curious, reflective, flexible and caring approach. Slough-Kiss

(2014) said that international school boards have a responsibility beyond the fundamental school level to promote diversity, for example by hiring diverse senior leaders. Interaction with the host culture may also be fundamental to developing intercultural understanding among students (Jackson, 2005). The host culture provides what Jackson (2005) describes as an authentic cross-cultural experience and thus allows for the type of involvement necessary to stimulate intercultural understanding. However, international schools can, at times, isolate themselves from the host culture, perhaps preventing the students from developing a full understanding of it (Jackson, 2005).

Recent research suggests that international schools are evolving in ways that reflect more nuanced approaches to global and local influences. Daw (2024) discusses how an international school in South Delhi appears to be adopting a 'glocalisation' model, in which global educational practices are integrated with national and cultural contexts. This approach challenges earlier perceptions of international education as merely an extension of Western curricula, instead indicating a more deliberate attempt to balance international adaptability with local awareness. Similarly, Probert (2023) critiques the increasing presence of British-style international schools in Asia, suggesting that these institutions may need to consider embedding their curricula more effectively within local educational and cultural frameworks. Without such efforts, there is a possibility that these schools may reinforce historical colonial narratives rather than support meaningful intercultural engagement. These perspectives imply that the success of international schooling is not solely dependent on curriculum content but also on the extent to which schools engage with their host cultures in ways that encourage intercultural understanding.

The economic and sociocultural positioning of international schools within their host countries has also been examined in recent literature. Courtois and Donnelly (2024) argue that the expansion of elite British international schools through satellite campuses may be contributing to economic inequalities, as these institutions often operate as commercial ventures rather than purely educational initiatives. Wu and Koh (2022) discuss how different international school models—such as British-, American-, and Canadian-style institutions—navigate national regulatory frameworks while maintaining distinct transnational branding. Meanwhile, Young (2023) and Ma (2023) examine the motivations of affluent

Chinese families, who increasingly appear to view international education as a strategic means of accumulating linguistic and cultural capital for their children. However, Young (2023) suggests that despite exposure to international schooling, students often retain strong national identities rather than developing the global perspectives often associated with international education. These findings indicate that the impact of international schooling on students' worldviews may be more complex than previously assumed, with outcomes depending on the extent to which international and national influences are balanced within each educational setting.

2.3 Contentions within International Schools

Despite the potential for fostering intercultural understanding, international schools often grapple with issues of colonialism. Hayden and Thompson (2016) highlight that these schools can perpetuate colonial legacies by promoting Western-centric curricula that marginalise local cultures. Allan (2002) discusses how this can create cultural dissonance and reinforce power dynamics reminiscent of colonial eras. Heyward (2002) emphasises the need for a shift from international to intercultural education to foster genuine cultural exchange and understanding, considering historical influences. Stein (2016) critiques how international schools can contribute to neo-colonialism by shaping indigenous students' identities through a Western educational lens. These critiques call for a re-evaluation of international school curricula to ensure they promote inclusivity and cultural respect.

Despite some efforts, challenges remain. Emenike and Plowright (2017) argue that international schools often promote a variant of dominant Western culture rather than true global citizenship. This can lead to a sense of cultural displacement among students, particularly those from non-Western backgrounds. Their study, focusing on indigenous Nigerian students in international schools, reveals that these students often struggle to navigate their identities amid conflicting cultural expectations from school and home. Identifying as Third Culture Indigenous Kids (TCIKs), after a number of years at the international school they exist in a "third space" where they face ideological and cultural pressures. Morales (2015) highlights the need for careful consideration of student transitions to these schools, as the cultural adjustment can be particularly challenging. In light of these

perspectives, it may be necessary for some international schools to consider how they might address and/or mitigate the perpetuation of colonial legacies. Understanding the significance of culture is crucial in this regard.

2.4 The Significance of Culture

Holliday (2010) refers to culture as a dynamic and fluid process shaped by everyday social interactions and contexts, arguing that it is learned rather than inherited, with our cultural frameworks derived from the social environments in which we were raised. Particularly, the movement of people from one part of this world to another, for a multitude of reasons, may inevitably lead to increased interactions between a wide range of cultures. Yet, positive social interactions between those who relocate and those indigenous to the geographical area may critically depend on how cultural differences are perceived and acted upon (Freeman, 1997). The number of interactions that could be described as unsuccessful due to cultural differences may be increasing with globalisation (Lucassen, 2018). Individuals who are unable to assimilate may find themselves as outgroup members, or groups living side by side may find it challenging to interact suitably.

Perceiving oneself as an outgroup member could lead to feelings of social isolation. Fowers (2015) suggests that our sense of identity and belonging is fundamentally tied to our group affiliations, which are crucial for our quality of life. Supporting this view, Cacioppo (2008) found that when people were asked what pleasures contribute most to their happiness, the overwhelming majority rated love, intimacy and social affiliation above wealth, fame and even physical health. Additionally, there is evidence indicating that social isolation and loneliness are on par with high blood pressure, obesity, lack of exercise, or smoking as risk factors for illness and early death. Many people who feel lonely may be surrounded by others yet feel disconnected, thus defining themselves as lonely regardless. For these individuals, a lack of connection not only alters behaviour but also manifests in measurements of stress hormones, immune function and cardiovascular function (Cacioppo, 2008). Belonging to a group is supported by strong, rapid and automatic social categorisation, through which individuals identify ingroup and outgroup members. This process may alleviate feelings of loneliness and promote connections, especially among

those who are part of the same group (Fowers, 2015). Therefore, it might be advantageous for international schools to consider how they can help their communities build strong connections within their culturally diverse settings, potentially benefiting both the mental and physical health of their students. Addressing cultural differences and fostering a sense of belonging are crucial for students from diverse backgrounds, as integration issues in international schools can exacerbate feelings of isolation and hinder the development of a cohesive school community. There is evidence to suggest that coming from different cultures may have an impact upon how an individual behaves in certain situations or responds to particular educational environments.

For example, Lemke-Westcott and Johnson (2013) found that local students in the Middle East found it necessary to adapt to different teaching styles when they attended a Canadian university there. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with local students attending the University of Calgary Canadian branch campus located in Qatar, with a particular interest in how students found the Western learning culture when compared to their home institutions' learning culture. This was described by the students as a challenge, one that was perhaps not recognised originally by the Western staff. Language barriers were also said to pose further challenges.

Furthermore, Allan (2002) carried out an ethnographic case study of an international school in the Netherlands, and found that monocultural school cultures can have a negative effect on cultural minorities, who can become isolated. Multicultural learning was also said to be inhibited. They ranked the domains of intercultural interaction in schools in order of importance as: peer group interaction; individual student factors; teacher student interaction; academic curriculum; institutional school factors; host culture; and home/school interaction.

Finally, Deveney (2005) conducted questionnaires, interviews, observations and written evidence to study the experiences of Thai students in an international school classroom. The Thai students in this study made up approximately 25% of the students in each class, and were a cultural minority in the school. It was found that some of these students found it challenging to take part in class discussions, and it was put forward that this could be related to the potentially more reserved nature of Thai culture. Whilst we cannot generalise

these findings to suggest that Thai students will consistently find classroom discussions challenging, we may be able to see from research such as this that it might be possible that an individual's culture could influence how they behave and respond to certain practices in the classroom.

2.5 Defining Third Culture Kids (TCKs)

Emenike and Plowright (2017) define Third Culture Kids (TCKs) as children who develop a cultural identity that is a blend of their parents' culture and the various cultures they interact with due to frequent relocations. This dynamic identity formation involves navigating complex social interactions and adapting to diverse cultural contexts (Hayden, 2018). International schools are often regarded as key spaces of continuity for Third Culture Kids (TCKs) and other internationally mobile students who experience frequent relocations. The transition from primary to secondary education in these settings can be particularly challenging, as students may be required to navigate academic and social adjustments alongside cultural change. This study explores how international schools manage such transitions and considers whether mindfulness-based interventions may provide support in easing adaptation. By examining educators' experiences with mindfulness practices, the research aims to contribute to an understanding of how international schools might enhance student well-being and facilitate intercultural adjustment during critical transitional phases.

Although the term TCK might be considered by some to predominantly relate to Western individuals, it equally affects those from other parts of the world (Cockburn, 2002). Bagnall (2012) interviewed international school students in Brazil and identified three groups: those sure of their country of origin, those unsure and those who have adopted a global rather than national identity. Cockburn (2002) notes that TCKs may be more likely to feel like 'hidden immigrants' when they return home. Additionally, loss, grief and change are common features of their lives, potentially increasing feelings of vulnerability and loss of control. Gilbert (2008), through interviews and email conversations with 43 TCKs, expressed that they may often experience ambiguous losses and their grief might go unnoticed or insufficiently attended to. These losses can relate to persons, places, pets and possessions, as well as existential losses such as a loss of meaning related to aspects of themselves.

19

Cockburn (2002) explains that globalisation has meant that a substantial number of children may be growing up in an especially different cultural environment to their parents and that this is continuously changing at a rapid pace. TCKs often move to multiple countries during their childhoods and adolescence. They have a different experience to those in their home countries, as well as those who originated from the host country (Miller et al, 2020). Changing countries continuously may have a psychological effect depending upon the parents' mechanism of coping with the change, those under five appearing to be the most vulnerable to increased anxiety or negative emotion. These children are likely to have experienced the loss of homes and relationships more so than the average child, requiring them to adapt more frequently. For instance, relocating can involve transitioning from a tranquil coastal environment to a bustling urban setting, significantly altering the social and environmental dynamics to which an individual must adapt. The social skill requirements may also become more complex, necessitating the ability to interact effectively with individuals from diverse age groups, cultures and backgrounds. This phenomenon is particularly relevant for individuals moving from Eastern to Western contexts, yet the majority of TCK research predominantly focuses on those relocating from Western to Eastern contexts (Cockburn, 2002). This geographic bias in research overlooks the equally significant experiences of TCKs from non-Western backgrounds and their challenges in adapting to new cultural environments.

Dillon (2019) describes the term Third Culture Kid (TCK) as often referring to individuals living in a host country different from their country of origin during their developmental years. However, this definition may not encompass all children within the modern global context. For example, children attending boarding or international schools within their own country, where they have spent the majority of their lives and thus social interactions, can still experience an intercultural context. Emenike and Plowright (2017) specifically studied Nigerian students attending international schools in their home country and explored their perceptions. They referred to these students as Third Culture Indigenous Kids (TCIKs). The negotiation of these indigenous students' identities results in the formation of a 'third space,' within which they experience an intercultural environment. Emenike and Plowright (2017) suggest that these students navigate through different cultural expectations from their environment, forming a third culture distinct from TCKs. The conflicts experienced by TCIKs

relate to the neo-colonising nature of educational provision within an indigenous context, subjecting them to ideological pressures and necessitating the dissociation of their personal identities from their indigenous identities. TCIKs, as a group of students, tend to be neglected in international education research (Emenike and Plowright, 2017).

One aspect of being a TCIK was suggested to be that they viewed themselves as having a higher than average social status. This could be due to international schools putting forward the notion that Western culture might be considered to be especially appealing and possibly even preferred over their indigenous culture. However, the increased social status of attending these schools could arguably lead to a feeling that the indigenous culture is inferior, with some students being called names that were the Nigerian word for 'white' (Emenike and Plowright, 2017). After interviewing a sample of 66 students aged 12 to 18 years from two international schools in Nigeria, Emenike and Plowright's (2017) findings were that the students felt they lived in a 'white/western' world alongside a second local culture world. They felt they had to behave one way at school, and another at home, which some found problematic. These students appeared to imagine Western life as particularly positive compared to their local lives, perhaps as a result of idealistic representations within their schools. This image of the West may have caused the students to feel conflicted between their two worlds, possibly resulting in personal conflicts regarding their ideological positioning. The culture of the school can conflict with the culture developed from students' past experiences and social interactions, potentially leading to negative outcomes. Emenike and Plowright (2017) conclude by identifying the potential irony in an education system that is said to encourage critical thought, producing students who are more likely to critique their home culture rather than question the Western culture put forward to them. This clash between school culture and home culture highlights the complex and often challenging nature of navigating multiple cultural identities.

After conducting an interpretive case study of a group of Singaporean university students attending an Australian university, Pyvis and Chapman (2005) illustrate that these students' experiences reflect the challenges commonly faced by TCKs. These students encounter stress related to psychological adaptation; a sense of loss from the removal of relationships, status, role and possessions; fear of rejection or actual experiences of rejection from the

new culture; confusion regarding identity; anxiety about cultural differences; and feelings of helplessness, including confusion, frustration, and depression. This example shows the complex nature of TCKs' experiences, illustrating how cultural conflicts and the need for adaptation can lead to significant psychological and emotional challenges.

Recent research suggests that TCK experiences may be more complex and fluid than earlier models have implied. Koini et al. (2023) question the prevailing tendency in the literature to depict international transitions in predominantly negative terms, instead arguing that these transitions may be better understood as ongoing, multi-layered processes rather than linear or predictable ones. Their longitudinal study indicates that internationally mobile families navigate several transitions simultaneously, with many reporting relatively positive experiences. This perspective challenges earlier research, which has often focused on the difficulties encountered by TCKs without fully considering how they, alongside their families, actively manage and adjust to new environments. Similarly, Lijadi and van Schalkwyk (2018) examined the school experiences of TCKs across four decades, suggesting that while international schools were previously regarded as highly international in nature, demographic shifts may have altered this perception. They argue that some international schools may no longer provide the same level of cross-cultural interaction as earlier generations experienced, raising questions about the extent to which international schools remain the most effective educational settings for TCKs. These findings indicate that while international schooling continues to be a preferred choice for many globally mobile families, its effectiveness in supporting TCKs may depend on how schools respond to changing student profiles and intercultural dynamics.

2.6 Advantages of Being a TCK

Despite these challenges, being a TCK can have its advantages. Van Oord (2005) describes how some believe that students may lose part of their identity or culture when adapting to new social situations. However, based on his years in international schools, he reported that students often adapt quickly and without signs of serious crisis, retaining the essential elements of their personalities. It is important to note that these observations are based on individual interpretation and thus reflect personal perceptions of the environment. Research

suggests that intercultural sensitivity (ICS), defined as the ability to recognise, respect and appropriately respond to cultural differences, may be higher in those attending international schools. Straffon (2003) conducted a study with a sample of 336 students, aged 13 to 19, from over 40 different countries, participating in structured interviews. The Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI Manual, 1998, referenced in Straffon, 2003) was used to measure ICS, and it was found that the level of ICS students scored was positively correlated with the length of time that students had attended international schools. Dawaele and Oudenhoven (2009) gave 79 teenagers in London questionnaires designed to assess their multiculturalism. Half of this sample were born abroad and had settled in London during their childhood, so were considered TCKs. TCKs were found to depict more open-mindedness and cultural empathy, with higher scores correlated with speaking multiple languages. However, emotional stability was seen to be lower in these individuals, a possible issue that will be further discussed in the following section. Another piece of research carried out by Fail et al. (2004) examined the lives of 11 former international students who attended school between 20 and 50 years prior. Data was gathered through postal questionnaires as well as in-depth interviews. They found that a significant portion of the sample saw themselves as understanding and relating to a number of places around the world and perceived this as advantageous. Although it was admitted that they felt 'different,' this was not necessarily interpreted as a negative aspect of their experience. They reported feeling positive about their ability to feel at home in multiple different places and would often find cosmopolitan cities to live where there was generally a community of people from similar backgrounds. However, participants did also report feeling marginalised in the countries they lived in, even when these were their passport countries, and that this feeling had not faded with time. A common theme was that there was a period of culture shock upon return to their 'home' countries and that they had felt unprepared for this (Fail et al., 2004). Struggling with the formation of identity, establishing a sense of belonging, and experiencing more loss than average could be challenges that TCKs face, which shall be looked at next.

2.7 Challenges Faced by TCKs

An in-depth thematic analysis was carried out by Lijadi and Schalkwyk (2014), exploring the autobiographical accounts and semi-structured interviews of ten TCKs. Participants were aged 18-22 years and had lived in three or more countries at the time of the study. A significant challenge reported by these TCKs was the consistent requirement to adjust to new social groups. They emphasised that gaining a broad cultural understanding and social skills was essential for acceptance in each new place. Complying with local norms was a struggle for some, as doing so was particularly important for being quickly accepted. Resilience was a recurring theme in these discussions. Establishing deep and meaningful friendships was said to be difficult. While multiple surface-level friendships could be found, having someone close for deep conversations was largely absent. This sample could be described as contextually specific, wherein, all participants were children of affluent private-sector international employees. Yet, these findings align with Kilguss (2008), who states that TCKs can particularly find it challenging to establish a sense of belonging and may be considered culturally marginalised. They might experience higher anxiety than the average individual due to the need to adapt to their social situations more frequently, possibly reducing the authenticity they feel they can express with others.

Loss and grief is described by Gilbert (2008) as one of the most evident issues that TCKs might experience more so than most. Forty three TCKs took part in interviews and submitted data by way of email for this research. Gilbert (2008) found that the losses TCKs experience are often more ambiguous and the grief experienced may often go unnoticed or overlooked. Losses tended to fit into the categories of people, places, pets and possessions. Additionally, losses related to safety and trust, the loss of personal identity and the loss of home. Some grief caused by these losses could go unresolved according to Gilbert (2008) because parents or others may contradict the expression of it by offering an alternative narrative such as that of adventure or experiences of culture. Despite it being perhaps generally accepted that children prefer predictability and consistency in their lives, the lack of consistency in the lives of TCKs was evident. In the interviews it was said that the lifestyle was beneficial, yet coping with loss had become a constant in their lives. It was concluded

that TCKs may find themselves in an ongoing state of uncertainty about safety, trust, identity, where they belong and where they truly feel at home (Gilbert, 2008).

Another challenge that may influence the experiences of TCKs is the extent to which international schools provide sufficient support for student transitions. Tretheway and Vanderburg (2022) argue that parents enrolling their children in international schools often expect the curriculum and educational environment to closely resemble that of their home country. However, their research suggests that students may face unexpected difficulties, including language barriers even in English-medium schools, where the dominant spoken language among peers may not necessarily be English. Their findings indicate that schools could benefit from adopting more structured approaches to transition support, ensuring that students receive adequate preparation before arrival and continued guidance after enrolment. This perspective aligns with Ezra (2003), who suggested that early-stage adaptation strategies may be critical in easing the transition process. Additionally, Tretheway and Vanderburg (2022) highlight the value of incorporating student perspectives when designing transition programmes, as those directly experiencing international schooling may be best placed to provide insights into the challenges they face. This suggests that a more student-centred approach to transitions, which takes into account linguistic, cultural, and academic considerations, may enhance the overall adjustment process for TCKs.

A more recent study by Trethewy, Vanderburg, and van den Akker (2022) highlights the necessity of addressing grief as a core element in the transition experiences of Third Culture Kids (TCKs). Their research underscores the concept of disenfranchised grief, where the grief experienced by TCKs is often unacknowledged or minimised by the surrounding adults, impacting the students' adaptation to new school environments. This study calls for the inclusion of grief support strategies within school transition programmes, emphasising that successful transitions for TCKs depend on recognising and addressing their experiences of loss. The research suggests that transition programmes in international schools should incorporate frameworks like the Kübler-Ross grief model to help TCKs navigate their emotional challenges, thereby fostering a more supportive and effective transition process.

Research by Ezra (2003) discusses the notion that TCKs may experience more transitions than the average child due to changing locations and schools more often. It is stated that

this could lead to feeling less secure than those who experience fewer transitions, and might be acted out through frustration and anger. In particular, it is suggested that learning a new language and adapting to new cultures can exacerbate these issues. Language was noted as especially important, as some students do not have a firm rooting in their original culture and could lose their mother tongue; alternatively some students may not know English and are sent to an English-speaking school. Ezra (2003) mentions that schools could help students by focusing very carefully on the initial transition stage into the school. Limberg and Lambie (2011) may be said to support such a suggestion as they discuss in detail how the transition to a new international school can be challenging for TCKs. They reiterate that TCKs may find establishing a secure identity challenging, particularly when they are moving frequently. This could lead to a dysfunctional identity development such as having an inaccurate self-image, or caution towards developing relationships. These students might spend more time focusing on adjusting to their changing environment rather than developing their identity.

It is put forward by Limberg and Lambie (2011) that this could influence both academic achievement and emotional stability. TCKs are said to perhaps be less able to be aware of the here and now. Their identity could be more grounded in future goals and aspirations such as a career path, as opposed to their present surroundings. A limited awareness of the present could negatively influence a TCK's ability to identify with their current environment and may prevent them from connecting with their first culture on an emotional level. Additionally, they might idealise their first culture despite never having visited home. These students commonly experience high levels of stress due to the grief and loss experienced during transitions, which could lead to stronger feelings of vulnerability and loss of control. For these reasons TCKs might be in particular need during times of transition of support (Limberg and Lambie, 2011). Suggestions are put forward as to how international schools may support these students through their transition, and these will be discussed in more detail as we move forward.

Allan (2002) conducted an ethnographic case study at an international school in the Netherlands to investigate the challenges faced by Third Culture Kids (TCKs) in monocultural school environments. The study revealed that monocultural school cultures

often negatively impact cultural minorities, possibly leading to increased feelings of isolation and marginalisation among TCKs. The research highlighted how the lack of multicultural learning opportunities can inhibit the development of a more inclusive and supportive educational environment. Allan (2002) observed that cultural minorities in these settings frequently struggled to integrate and form meaningful connections with their peers, which exacerbated their sense of isolation. The study highlights the potential importance of developing a multicultural learning environment that supports the diverse cultural backgrounds of all students.

However, it may be wise to note that this research does have limitations. The ethnographic approach, while providing deep insights into the specific school context, limits the generalisability of the findings to other international schools or educational settings. Additionally, the study's focus on a single school may not capture the full range of experiences of TCKs in different regions or types of schools. It might be challenging to see how the context of the school might influence these results (Firestone, 1993). The reliance on qualitative data also means that the findings are subject to the interpretations and biases of the researcher. Despite these limitations, Allans' (2002) study offers valuable perspectives on the challenges faced by TCKs and the need for more culturally responsive educational practices.

2.8 What might aid TCKs/TCIKs?

Supporting the transition of Third Culture Kids (TCKs) in international schools is crucial for their academic and social well-being. Bates (2013) researched ways to support the transition of TCKs in international schools. Professional development of staff, transition teams and orientation and departure programmes were listed as the main ways to support these students. She suggested that departure programmes were more in need of, as schools tended to offer orientation programmes but not departure. The key notion was that increased awareness of the challenges these students face within international schools was vital. Limberg and Lambie (2011) also put forward ways in which school counsellors in particular could help students transition to international schools. They state that these students particularly need to be surrounded by people who have been through similar experiences during the transition. Orientation programmes that include the whole family

could be considered. Teachers may need to be briefed about students' individual situations and trained in ways to deal with these. Buddy programmes or the construction of friendship circles could aid in building relationships quickly in the beginning. International days or diversity weeks might help to build awareness and/or give the student an opportunity to celebrate cultures that they feel affiliated with.

One study in particular carried out by Hannaford (2016) looked at how online platforms might help these students with maintaining relationships. This was a multiple case study looking at students from one international school. It used journals in which participants recorded aspects of their digital lives at home. These were used to initiate conversation during weekly discussions. Hannaford (2016) found examples of students using online platforms to retain friendships from their past, for example a 10-11 year old boy who played online sports with his friend in a country he previously lived in and had known for a number of years, as well as a girl in grade 6 who belonged to an online book reviewing community alongside a friend who had left her current school. The girl did not manage to maintain her relationship with the friend through this mechanism, but did create new friendships with others that perhaps would last through transitions in the future. It was put forward by Hannaford (2016) that online platforms could offer opportunities to TCK/TCIKs who wish to maintain long-term relationships, perhaps helping to reduce challenges faced by the losing of multiple relationships throughout their developmental lives. Yet, given the risks of the online world, this might be best done under careful supervision.

Addressing the challenges faced by Third Culture Kids (TCKs) has led researchers to explore various interventions, with a focus on enhancing skills that support their continuous adaptation to diverse cultural settings. Lee et al (2007) tried implementing an intervention with TCKs whereby it was hoped that their creative problem-solving skills might be improved. The theory was that this could help them with the challenges that they face, given the large requirement for consistent adaptation in their lives. A modest improvement in these skills was seen, yet further research would be required to see whether this intervention was indeed effective. Nonetheless, this research might illustrate that there is an interest in potentially improving certain skills to aid these students with their ability to cope with continuous change. Another skill that could be of interest is that of cultural intelligence

(Earley and Peterson, 2004). With their research focused on managers that work overseas, Earley and Peterson (2004) suggest that developing cultural intelligence in global managers could help them to become more effective.

2.9 Transitioning from Primary to Secondary School

It might be wise to state that all children encounter and must deal with transitions and the majority develop healthily (Howard and Reubke, 2020). Yet, perhaps one of the biggest transitions that they may face in their educational life is that of the move from primary to secondary school (Perry, 2013). In particular, this transition coincides with puberty, which could be described as an especially emotionally tumultuous time for young people (Newton, 2014). If this transition is not navigated in what may be described as a positive manner, this could have lasting negative consequences for some. During these times they may experience an increase in negative emotion, and perhaps struggle with maintaining or building new relationships (Lucey and Reay, 2000).

When considering the literature surrounding TCKs it becomes apparent that one of the main sources of challenge for these students may be consistent transition (Pollock, 2017). Transition requires an individual to leave behind a part of their lives and enter a new and unknown stage. For TCKs, this can be to leave a country where they understand the language and culture, as well as their homes and friendships. One transition that the majority of students go through however is that of the transition from primary to secondary school. This transition has been the focus of a significant amount of research. Research has looked at core subjects and the transition across primary to secondary within these subjects, such as mathematics. Additionally, there have been studies that have focused on a specific group within the student body and how the transition might influence them in particular. For example, studies have looked at Special Educational Needs (SEN), gender and ethnicity. The research surrounding these topics will now be explored so that a more detailed image of what sorts of challenges might await students during this transition might be formed. An image that could help with understanding why this transition could be especially challenging for students living in an intercultural context.

Transitioning from primary to secondary school is a multifaceted experience influenced by various factors such as subject-specific challenges, gender, ethnicity and special

educational needs. Each of these aspects can impact a student's adjustment process. For instance, while some students might struggle with academic discontinuities in subjects like mathematics, others might face social and emotional hurdles related to their gender or ethnic identity. Additionally, students with special educational needs may require tailored support to navigate this transition successfully. Exploring these diverse influences helps in understanding the complexities of school transitions.

2.10 Transition in Specific Subjects: Mathematics

Having been a mathematics teacher for a number of years, I was naturally interested to see what the literature said about how students manage their mathematics progress during the transition from primary to secondary school. As a core subject, mathematics is often a focus of research when looking at the transition from primary to secondary school. It has been said that this transition can have a negative effect on students' mathematics performance (Cantley, 2020). One of the possible reasons for this may be a discontinuity between the primary and secondary curriculums. In primary schools a generalist teacher will deliver lessons of all subjects, whilst secondary teachers specialise in their subjects. Secondary schools often produce a syllabus based on their knowledge and problem solving, whilst some students may lack basic skills such as numeracy that are not included in this syllabus. Physical activities are also more common in primary, whilst in secondary this is utilised less often (Cantley, 2020). In assessing the impact on the transition from primary to secondary education more broadly, evidence suggests that there were academic challenges likely resulting from differences in the curriculum.

However, the relationship students have with their mathematics teachers could also affect a student's transition. Attard (2013) conducted longitudinal research in Sydney whereby students were followed through their middle school years. It was found that at this school a reliance on computer based activities decreased the amount of teacher-student interaction, which potentially prevented a close working relationship from forming. The secondary teachers' approaches were generally also less physical than in primary. These two factors (the less close relationship being stated as key) were said to reduce engagement in mathematics in the secondary years. Yet, it might be wise to consider that the context of this school was rather specific. That being the case, it was a new Australian school that had

one-to-one laptops and these were used the majority of the time. The teachers were also qualified in a variety of ways, wherein art, P.E. or other subject teachers covered mathematics lessons due to a shortage in mathematics teachers. Therefore, it might be possible that the rather particular context in this study could question the transferability of the findings. Nonetheless, building new relationships can be said to be a key element of transitioning from primary to secondary school, so the relationship students develop with their teachers could be important.

Darragh (2013) carried out a case study that involved interviewing six girls whilst they were transitioning to secondary school. They describe that the development of a positive mathematics identity is important, particularly in promoting confidence in the subject and comfort in the classroom. A sense of inclusion in the classroom could help to foster said confidence. As students must build new relationship networks and adapt to a new environment during the transition, their sense of connection and inclusion could be a challenge during this time.

By way of secondary longitudinal analysis of the Avon Longitudinal Study of Parents and Children, Evans and Field (2020) found that mathematical attainment across the primary to secondary transition is correlated with the following; that being, parental education, parental mental health, a harmonious parent-child relationship and parental involvement in their child's school life were predictors for mathematical attainment trajectories during the primary to secondary transition. Evans and Field (2020) suggested that mathematics attainment in the UK could be considered a crisis, and that poor mathematics attainment at school may significantly increase the risk of unemployment later in life.

Konstantinos et al (2007) found that students often view the transition to secondary school as an opportunity to start a new fresh school career, but can become disappointed if they are not able to keep up academically, especially in mathematics. Despite many viewing mathematics as being taught in a chain of stages, the jump from primary to secondary can be said to be a significant challenge for some. It is suggested that geometry could be a topic that might be utilised to help to develop a chain between the primary and secondary transition. Prendergast et al (2019) gave questionnaires to teachers in Ireland, and found

that a lack of continuity between curricula and a lack of knowledge of the other school's curriculum were common themes. Paul (2014) analysed 60 students who were randomly selected from four secondary schools in South Africa. Using questionnaires, classroom practices, curriculum continuity, students' preparedness for the transition and the support provided by the receiving schools was explored. Differences in pedagogy, changes in the mathematics syllabus content and the relationships between the students and teacher were found to be the most significant effects of the transition. Demonty et al (2018) attempted to implement activities into primary lessons that would help to introduce algebra, as this is often a topic that new secondary students struggle with. However, they found that many primary teachers lacked the knowledge required for teaching the activities provided. Evidence suggests that the challenges that come from transitioning from primary to secondary manifest themselves in the classroom, particularly in such lessons as mathematics. In addition to the issues that occur outside the classroom, within the classroom there are differences in teaching style, teacher student relationships, mathematical topics and increased difficulty in understanding concepts, as well as problem solving.

Having taken a more detailed look into one core subject, mathematics, it could be said that the transition from primary to secondary school is complicated. Individual subjects will have specific complications. However, one consistent theme that might be drawn from this is that the building and maintaining of relationships might be fundamental to students' ability to deal with the additional complexity during the time of transition. To follow, I will consider a number of other factors that could complicate the transition from primary to secondary school. This will begin with considering SEN students, then gender, before finishing with ethnicity.

2.11 Students with Additional Needs and Transition to Secondary School

One subset of the student population that research has focused upon is that of those with additional needs. These include those with social, emotional and/or behavioural needs, as well as, those with educational needs. Firstly, those with social, emotional and/or behavioural difficulties (SEBD) will be addressed.

Metzner et al (2020) recently conducted a systematic review of the literature surrounding those with SEBD and their transition from primary to secondary school. Well-being, achievements, social participation and support and expectations were analysed. Well-being appeared to be of the highest concern regarding those with SEBD, although this often adjusted over time. This review was said by Metzner et al (2020) to support the idea that students with SEBD may be more likely to struggle during their transition from primary to secondary school. Mowat (2020) could be seen to support Metzner et al's (2020) research when they describe that those with SEBD are more susceptible to a transition that involves high stress. Mowat (2020) describes that the transition can bring optimism or fear depending on the child, but those with SEBD usually struggle with emotional regulation, which can provide challenges during this time in terms of behaviour, emotional reactions to significant changes in their environment, social life and routine.

Looked-after children can find themselves with more SEBDs than non-looked after children, potentially causing them to find the transition from primary to secondary school relatively more challenging (Brewin and Statham, 2011). That is, Brewin and Statham (2011) explain that resilience and social skills appear to be key factors when assessing how smoothly a looked-after child experiences their transition to secondary school. They judged that these children must be monitored closely as they have a higher probability of difficulty. Another important aspect of the transition was said to be admission policies and communication between the primary and secondary schools. Brewin and Statham (2011) conducted semi-structured interviews with school staff, looked-after children and carers. Difficulty in establishing long-lasting relationships was said by teachers and carers to be a significant challenge, and most participants discussed the importance of peer relationships across the transition period. The looked- after children would often display more challenging behaviour around this time, interpreted by some participants as an attempt to gain more control over the situation. These children most often reported being fearful of bullying, getting lost, the increased challenge in the work and strict teachers. These concerns could be described as generally in line with most children, although looked-after children have a higher chance of experiencing bullying (Daly and Gilligan, 2005, cited in Brewin and Statham, 2011).

33

In terms of those with special educational needs, literature suggests that this group can struggle in terms of their attainment during the transition from primary to secondary school. For example, Bark and Brooks (2017) discuss that British children who struggle with literacy often struggle during the transition between primary and secondary school. Secondary schools often teach fewer lessons focused on basic literacy skills, and the jump in expectations of literacy skills between primary and secondary school can be large.

Cantali (2019) did a literature review of international studies looking at the transition between primary and secondary school for those with additional support needs. They noticed that very few studies follow participants over longer periods of time, despite the nature of the research indicating that there is a transition occurring. Five of 22 studies reviewed (filtered from an initial 52 texts) were longitudinal. A consistent theme in the reviewed literature was that there is a period of heightened anxiety before the transition occurs. Perhaps, as explained by Cantali (2019), this is understandable given that students will be anticipating a relatively significant change to their environment. Zeedyk (2003) suggested that the transition is generally an exciting time (Zeedyk, 2003, cited in Cantali, 2019). The literature does however depict that SEN students may experience a larger amount of anxiety than the average student potentially due to an increased risk of bullying, increased challenge of work, or increased risk of failing to be accepted into a new friendship group. Hughes et al (2013) also carried out a literature review looking at the transition from primary to secondary school for SEN children. They suggested that more data is required on the psychosocial impact of the transition on these children. Additionally, research into the separate types of SEN could be advantageous, as there are likely to be differences between them, with some being more at risk than others.

Some studies have focused on specific types of SEN, for example Downs syndrome, Asperger's syndrome or high-functioning autism. Mullan et al (2018) put forward that students who are diagnosed with Downs syndrome are especially vulnerable during their transition from primary to secondary school. They interviewed teachers and parents regarding their thoughts on this topic. Clear communication between the primary and secondary school in terms of the child's specific needs was said to be particularly important. Parents often had concerns about their child settling into their new, bigger school and that

schools might not have a sufficient support network for the child. Peters and Brooks (2016) stated that those diagnosed with Asperger syndrome and high-functioning autism have innate characteristics that can be intensified by the stress and anxiety commonly resulting from the transition from primary to secondary school. In this study, 17 parents from the North of England completed an online questionnaire about their child's transition experience. Anxiety, bullying, friendship and support were seen to be the key influencing factors during the transitional phase. Students with the needs described above therefore require particular attention when it comes to transitioning from primary to secondary school. There are always a number of such students in any school, with many schools having varying degrees of inclusion. For instance, some schools have mixed sets in year 7, requiring particular care with regards to focusing on said students to the degree that is necessary.

Once more, it may be seen that the consistent factor that may cause concern during the transition between primary to secondary could be relationships; more specifically, anxiety with regards to bullying and fear of failing to establish friendships could be one of the biggest concerns. This theme is perhaps not unlike the concerns with regards to TCKs, whereby entering a new foreign environment could pose challenges for the building and maintaining of relationships.

2.12 Gender and the Transition to Secondary School

Transitions are described by Jackson and Ward (2000) as an opportunity to explore a person's change in their construction of the self, the idea being that the image of the self may change as a result of the transition. Individuals going through a transition are confronted with potential challenges and threats, anxieties and excitements. It requires the relating of new experiences to old ones. Gender is said by Jackson and Ward (2000) to be a significant aspect of a person's self-image as it provides a framework for them to look at a situation or context and consider what the average person of their gender would usually do or how they might act. It is a tool that is used by children as guidance for behaviour and interpretation. Upon the transition to secondary school students are said to increase how much they compare themselves to others. Boys and girls, Jackson and Ward (2000) say, appear to react differently to this transition, perhaps because they observe those of their

own gender during the experience. When interviewing students, Jackson and Ward (2000) found that students preferred to compare their scores in tests to those of the same gender, explaining that they couldn't predict how the opposite gender would react. Boys were seen to be more competitive by way of aggression, with a theme of attempting to fight their way to the top of a hierarchy. Jackson and Ward (2000) propose that girls and boys respond differently to their new secondary school environments, and that it might be wise to keep this in consideration when discussing the possible effects of the primary to secondary transition.

Jidesjö (2008) found that students tend to be interested in different topics in primary school when compared to secondary school, and that gender differences apply. For example, primary students seem to be more interested in how things work, whilst secondary students are more interested in phenomena that science has yet to explain. In terms of gender, girls are often more interested in animals and society in primary school than health related topics (drugs, alcohol, sexually transmitted diseases) in secondary school, whilst boys appear to have a stronger interest in biology or technology. Boys also seem to be more consistent in the themes of their interests. Students who have only just undergone their transition to secondary school could find that the lessons and environment provided are not sufficiently in line with their general interests. Fisher (2016) looked at white British girls who were on Free School Meals (FSM) from eight different schools. They discuss the discourse that girls encounter during their primary and secondary years. In primary, it is described that girls are rewarded for being what is described as good or obedient. In secondary school messages in line with 'girl power' and a push back on 'hyperfemininity' are said to be more prominent. Fisher (2016) put forward that these ideas could clash, potentially leading girls to seeing academic success as less desirable. The girls in this study saw their academic performances generally drop after their transition to secondary school and this was in line with their identities being reported as less in line with the 'good girl' concept.

Another factor to consider may be emotional intelligence (EI) (Jordan et al, 2010), with the components of EI being explained by Jordan et al (2010) as interpersonal ability, adaptability and stress management, wherein interpersonal ability is described as the behaviours and tactics a person uses to interact. On the other hand, intrapersonal ability aids with managing emotions, coping with challenges and learning new information. It is argued that students

may see their academic attainment suffer in the core subjects of maths, science and English more so if they are lacking some or all of the key EI skills. Adaptability was seen to demonstrate the strongest relationship with achievement. When compared with girls upon entering secondary school, boys are seen to display increased amounts of threatening behaviour towards each other, often competing to establish their place in the male hierarchy (as also noted by Jackson and Ward, 2000). Jordan et al (2010) suggested that this could be why boys were seen to have a greater reliance on interpersonal ability and adaptability when entering secondary school. It is suggested that training in EI skills in primary school could be advantageous generally, but especially for boys, when preparing students for their transition to secondary school.

Prat and George (2005) used semi-structured questionnaires and interviews to find out what students described as the effects of the primary to secondary transition on their friendships. It was noted that there was a stronger desire by students to belong to a secure peer group during the time of the transition. Further to this, it was suggested by Prat and George (2005) that the continuity of peer group relations and friendships could be more important to students than the continuity and development of a curriculum. Girls in particular stated that it was challenging to create new friendship groups. Girls that were previously popular and fully accepted into a peer group were finding themselves isolated. Yet, boys were said to experience higher anxiety prior to the transition. This research was in line with Rens et al (2019) who studied 98 Dutch students and found that, before the transition, children were most concerned with whether their relationships would continue. Boys particularly judged it to be important to know someone at the secondary school, whilst girls were more interested in the new social environment. After the transition, most students stated that they underestimated the social emotional aspect that the transition would have and felt that they had been unprepared to handle the new environment independently, finding themselves depending on external support networks such as family or school staff.

Overall, it may be observed once more that the maintaining and building of relationships during the transition from primary to secondary might be one of the key considerations that students have. Girls could be anxious about being removed from a group and needing to establish themselves into a new one. Boys might be concerned that in order to be accepted

into a peer group they might need to endure physical aggression. Despite most of the students involved in the studies outlined belonging to particularly similar cultures, building and maintaining relationships may remain one of the largest challenges.

2.13 Ethnicity

Transition challenges for Third Culture Kids (TCKs) are further complicated by ethnicity. This section examines how being an ethnic minority impacts the transition to secondary school, comparing the experiences of ethnic minority students with their majority peers. It highlights social and emotional difficulties, such as racism and cultural misunderstandings, and discusses how these challenges relate to socio-economic status and the overall adaptation process, continuing the discussion on TCK transitions.

Being an ethnic minority upon arrival at a secondary school may add more challenges to the transition. There are a number of studies that have looked at those who are considered to be ethnic minorities and how they experience the transition in comparison to their ethnic majority peers. A longitudinal study was conducted by Hustinx (2002) who followed Dutch ethnic minority students for five years after their transition to secondary school. The social background of these students was controlled for. From their analysis, ethnicity did not appear to be a negative in terms of the transition; this included those who might otherwise have been considered at risk of a poor transition as a result of underachievement in primary school. For example, Moroccan children born in their motherland statically fit into this category. Although ethnic minorities often illustrate a lower performance in primary prior to the transition, this was said to have been corrected by the end of secondary. A larger concern for Hustinx (2002) was the indigenous students who were of a lower socio-economic background. Boado (2006), who controlled for variables such as class, found that ethnicity may play only a minor role when attempting to explain the lower attainment of immigrants in France after their transition. They describe that studies often suggest they are looking at ethnicity, but do not consider the potential influence of class. Specifically, whether a student was born in the home country (in this instance, France) was seen to be a higher predictor of decreased attainment than ethnicity. Also, some of the ethnic minority children were seen to perform better than their native peers once all other

variables were controlled for (Boado, 2006). On the other hand, mixed race students were seen to perform better than their full ethnic minority peers. These studies, however, appear to mostly focus on attainment. Considerations of the social and emotional experiences of these students was not part of the research.

Caulfield et al (2005) conducted interviews with 56 ethnic minority students, and 19 parents and staff based in Glasgow. The minimum criteria for the sample was that participants had to have resided in the country for five or more years. Recently arrived refugees were judged to likely have different experiences that could have confused the findings. They found that peer relationships were key during the transition, whether they are with friends who belong to the same ethnic group or not. However, racism amongst peers was seen to increase during secondary school, especially in the beginning months, with some experiencing bullying and gang fights. Almost all the students reported experiencing or witnessing some form of racism upon their arrival at secondary school. Some students reported that they felt their customs and culture were not respected by their Scottish peers. Yet, despite this and pre-transition anxiety, most students were said to have transitioned quite well in the long-term, having made new friends and some reporting that they were enjoying the additional freedom and being treated more like an adult.

Moreover, Caribbean students in the UK were interviewed by Reynolds (2007) with regards to their transition from primary to secondary school. These students were seen to have a wide range of friendship networks across diverse ethnic groups, although they reported that their closest friends would be of the same ethnic background. Reasons given for this was that such friends would share similar values such as trust, reciprocity, emotional support, community and identity. It was claimed that forming these same-ethnic friendships were valuable to the students in terms of developing a sense of belonging. These students would generally have a background of feeling distrusting of society, socially excluded and, at times, discriminated against. It can be said that ethnicity is very much a variable worth considering, especially as it appears ethnic students have a different (perhaps more challenging) experience and interpretation of it. Yet, evidence suggests that ethnicity does not increase the challenge of transitioning from primary to secondary school relative to other variables such as socio-economic status. Moreover, differences in outcome have been stated to

39

diminish over time in secondary school. What is more, ethnicity is often described in terms of race, when it can be argued that culture and race are both subsets of ethnicities and may need to be considered independently. For instance, a sample of Caribbean students were selected due to their ethnicity, the feedback from the interviews consistently alluding to cultural differences correlating with difficulties. Culture is thus perhaps an area worth considering, in that students from a culture different to that of the school they are transitioning to might find it more challenging than their peers. Next, literature surrounding a possible intervention during times of transition (mindfulness) will be explored.

What is more, Abacioglu, Volman, and Fischer (2020) conducted a significant study focusing on how teachers' multicultural attitudes and perspective-taking abilities influence the educational experiences of ethnic minority students. Their research highlights that teachers who embrace multiculturalism and demonstrate empathy towards diverse cultural backgrounds can significantly enhance the school environment for ethnic minority students. This positive and inclusive atmosphere is crucial for the students' ethnic-racial identity development and overall psychological well-being. The study underscores the importance of equipping educators with the skills to address and support the challenges faced by ethnic minority students, thereby fostering a more equitable and supportive educational transition. This research is essential in understanding how targeted interventions in teacher training can help mitigate the added complexities of ethnicity during school transitions.

In conclusion, while ethnicity can add layers of complexity to the transition experiences of Third Culture Kids (TCKs), socio-economic factors often play a more significant role. Ethnic minority students may face additional social and emotional challenges, such as racism and cultural misunderstandings. It may be important for international schools to keep this in mind when considering how to support the transition of their diverse student bodies into the secondary school.

2.14 A Potential Intervention: Mindfulness

Mindfulness, the act of purposefully focusing on one thing (such as the breath) and returning said focus to this each time the mind wanders, might aid students during their transition from primary to secondary school in an intercultural context (Williams and Penman, 2012).

Specifically, when a student focuses on something that helps them to live in the present moment, then anxiety with regards to the future, or grief with regards to things lost in the past might not spiral into long-term ruminations or more intense emotions (Williams and Penman, 2012). As mentioned, mindfulness has specifically been said by some to be potentially useful to those experiencing intercultural challenges (Ghorbani et al, 2009). Those that are more mindful could find that they might be less intensely emotionally impacted by frustrations related to their transition from primary to secondary school in an intercultural environment. Additionally, Gärtner (2013) suggests that mindfulness might be neglected as a factor in nurturing readiness for change. They state that mindful individuals are more likely to foresee opportunities rather than threats in the change taking place (although this may also depend on the ethos of the school). It is also said that they may be able to overcome cognitive distortions and perhaps are better equipped for dealing with negative emotions that might result from a transition (Ramler et al, 2016). Other interventions with regards to the transition from primary to secondary school could have been considered, such as summer camps or parental involvement, but these are often more related to reducing the academic impact of the transition rather than the building and maintaining of relationships (Siddiqui et al, 2014, and Lau and Power, 2018). Dvořáková et al (2019) discuss in detail how mindfulness might aid those undergoing the transition to college in the US. Similarly perhaps to the transition from primary to secondary, some students are said to have a positive experience whilst others may experience depression, anxiety and stress during the transition period. It is suggested that mindfulness is said to increase students' abilities to cope with the transition by strengthening their socioemotional competencies (allowing for the development of a good support network) and furthering the development of adaptive and coping resources like those that reduce stress and influence perspective. Dvořáková et al (2019) theorise that mindfulness might be specifically useful in aiding with adjustment to a new academic environment and fulfilling the developmental tasks of this period of time.

The following will begin by discussing a range of organisations going through a transition period wherein mindfulness is claimed to aid the members within them. Following this the focus will be increased from organisations in general to educational institutions. Mindfulness with regards to intercultural contexts will also be discussed, though the discussion will

remain centred upon transitions and mindfulness. Finally, literature related to the primary to secondary transition with respect to mindfulness will be analysed.

2.15 Mindfulness and Readiness for Change

Transition may be said to be a theme of life across all ages, including in the workplace. There have been some interesting studies that have looked at the implementation of mindfulness interventions during a particular transition phase within a workplace. A large proportion of behaviour in organisations is said by Gondo (2013) to occur in a relatively automatic and non-conscious manner. When an organisation goes through a transition (for example, in order to achieve a goal) such behaviour is disrupted as adaptation, on behalf of the people in the organisation, is required. This is described as a requirement that can be said to cause difficulties for some. Gondo (2013) explains that those who are practised at "being attentive to and aware of what is taking place in the present" (Brown and Ryan, 2003, P822, cited in Gondo, 2013) are more likely to overcome the challenge of dealing with a transition. That is, having a heightened sense of awareness may aid individuals to identify when their implicitly held assumptions (that support their automatic routine behaviours) are no longer helpful (Gondo, 2013).

Gondo's (2013) claim, as to the relationship between mindfulness and dealing with change, may be said to be visible when looking at a transition that many organisations go through, namely mergers or acquisitions. Charoensukmongkol (2016) looked specifically at the contribution of mindfulness to employee psychological reactions to mergers and acquisitions (M&As), and its possible influence on behavioural resistance to M&As. They gave 114 Japanese bank employees questionnaires. This Japanese bank was acquiring a local financial institute in Thailand, and the data was collected one week prior to the official integration. It was found that employees who exhibited a higher level of mindfulness generally reported a lower influence on their mood, feelings and attitude, which was associated with a lower behavioural resistance to M&A. (although other factors that may have influenced attitudes were not considered in this research - such as leadership style, possible changes in remuneration etc.). Nonetheless, this study could offer some support to Gondo's (2013) claims.

42

Rather than focusing on all members of an organisation with a specific type of transition Chesley and Wylson (2016) interviewed 19 leaders on the topic of general organisational change. They gave them questionnaires to explore how they dealt with the inevitable ambiguity of change, how they manage this, and whether mindfulness influences them with this process. They found that leaders who utilised mindfulness tend to deal with ambiguity in different ways. It appears to the researchers that mindfulness may increase leaders' abilities to interact with others calmly, maintain perspective and attune with others' emotional states. Good et al (2016, cited by Chesley and Wylson, 2016) describe that mindfulness in the workplace may reduce mind-wandering, improve creativity and problem-solving, increase self-control and reduce stress. Mindfulness may therefore aid with an individual's ability to manage their emotional reactions to the ambiguity of a transition.

In addition to dealing with a change once it has manifested, there is also research in terms of readiness for change. That being the case, Gärtner (2013) reviewed the literature on readiness for change in relation to mindfulness. They noted that, on the individual level, mindfulness may improve readiness for change by making the individual's attitudes and perceived experience more flexible, and possibly also by influencing self-efficacy. Gärtner (2013) suggests that mindfulness might be neglected as a factor in nurturing readiness for change. They state that mindful individuals are more likely to foresee opportunities rather than threats in the change taking place. Individuals may be able to better overcome thoughts that may cause them to perceive reality inaccurately, and perhaps might be better equipped for dealing with negative emotions that might result from a transition. It is also stressed by Gärtner (2013) that mindfulness is not a stable innate personality trait, but rather a skill that can be learned, which is why it can be seen to improve with practice. Therefore, if viewed in the context of this research, it might be possible that primary students who practise mindfulness prior to their transition to secondary school could find themselves more ready for said transition.

2.16 Mindfulness in Educational Institutions

At this point the focus will be increased from organisations in general to those that can be described as educational institutions. Interest in the possible effects of mindfulness with

respect to these institutions has been increasing over recent years (Ramler et al, 2016). Specifically, an area of transition in the lives of young people that has received some attention (whereby mindfulness has been utilised) is the transition from school to university. Although the age group of these individuals can be described as dissimilar from those being focused on in this research, it may be worthwhile to explore the potential influence that mindfulness has been claimed to have on these older students; students that can be described as going through a similar transition as that of primary to secondary, that is, from one educational institution to a comparatively larger one. For example, Ramler et al (2016) studied the efficacy of an adapted mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) intervention designed to foster adjustment among first-year university students. Their sample consisted of 62 participants that were assigned to either an intervention or control group. Cortisol was measured through salivary samples and participants also completed a questionnaire designed to assess their adjustment. Intervention students also completed a mindfulness questionnaire pre- and post-intervention. Reduced physiological stress was observed in intervention participants, as well as significantly better personal-emotional adjustment. However, it might be worth considering that only short-term effects were analysed in this research, so it might not be possible to claim that the intervention had any long term effects.

When reviewing the available literature, Dvořáková et al (2018) discuss in detail how mindfulness might aid those undergoing the transition to college in the US. Similarly to the transition from primary to secondary, some students are said to have a positive experience whilst others may experience depression, anxiety and stress. Mindfulness is said to increase students' abilities to cope with the transition by strengthening their socioemotional competencies and supporting the development of adaptive and coping resources. Dvořáková et al (2018) theorise that mindfulness might be useful in aiding with adjustment to a new academic environment and fulfilling the developmental tasks of this period of time.

Finkelstein-Fox et al (2018) also focused on first year US college students when conducting their research. They express that mindfulness and the ability to regulate distressing emotions adaptively often correlate positively with wellbeing. Their study examined the contributions of mindfulness and adaptive emotion regulation abilities in maintaining well-being during the transition to college. Their sample consisted of 158 undergraduate

students at the University of Connecticut. Most of the students were female (80%) and the mean age was 17.83 at the beginning of the study. The majority of the sample were also white (79%), with the remaining being Asian/Asian American (12%), African-American (4%) and other (4%). Online surveys were administered to the participants at the beginning of their first year at college, and again at the end of the first term. These surveys aimed to measure the levels of mindfulness, adaptive emotion regulation abilities and emotional and spiritual well-being. The Cognitive and Affective Mindfulness Scale-Revised (CAMS-R; Feldman et al, 2007, cited in Finkelstein-Fox et al, 2018) was used to measure the level of mindfulness. This scale particularly aims to measure present-focus, awareness and acceptance. It is designed for use by populations who are not well acquainted with mindfulness and meditation generally. To assess psychological well-being the DASS-21 scale (Lovibond and Lovibond, 1995, cited by Finkelstein-Fox et al, 2018) was used. This is a shortened version of an original 42-item DASS scale created by the same researchers and has been relatively widely tested for reliability and validity. Gratz and Roemer's (2004, cited in Finkelstein-Fox et al, 2018) Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale (DERS) was used to measure participants' adaptive emotion regulation abilities, whilst the FACIT-Sp-Non-Illness (Bredle et al, 2011; Peterman et al, 2002, cited in Finkelstein-Fox et al, 2018) was used to assess spiritual well-being.

Finkelstein-Fox et al (2018) found that adaptive emotion regulation abilities were more strongly associated with well-being than mindfulness. However, mindfulness was found to protect against changes in depression for students with greater emotion regulation difficulties. They concluded that promoting mindfulness practices and adaptive emotion regulation abilities at the start of college could build resilience in undergraduate students. It should be noted, though, that there may be limitations observed with this research. The sample consisted of mostly white female students who had grown up in relatively financially stable settings in the North Eastern US, so the generalisability of the results is unknown. Additionally, being enrolled into university could indicate adaptive regulation abilities that are perhaps different to the general population. The findings are also based on self-reported data collected by surveys which might be less valid than having conducted interviews, as well as being open to potential false reporting. Nonetheless, further research into the

potential benefits of mindfulness with regards to adapting to a new educational environment is recommended by Finkelstein-Fox et al (2018).

2.17 Mindfulness in an Intercultural Context

It has been described previously that students who transition from primary to secondary school in an intercultural context may find the experience has some additional challenges. Ghorbani et al (2009) discussed that mindfulness may have a role to play in resolving intercultural conflicts, but that this suggestion rested upon a relatively untested presumption that mindfulness plays out similarly cross-culturally. They tested this presumption on university students from two countries that are perhaps known to be in conflict at the governmental level, Iran and the US. There were 723 Iranian participants and 900 US participants who completed the Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale (Brown and Ryan, 2003, cited in Ghorbani et al, 2009). It was found that the distribution of the mindfulness level of each group was synchronised. This was regardless of the cultural differences. It was suggested by Ghorbani et al (2009) therefore that mindfulness might be considered to be a similar psychological process across cultures that may have a plausible role in resolving intercultural conflicts.

Gu et al (2020) recently conducted a study focused on how Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) could aid international students with their adjustment to a new cultural environment. In particular, they were looking at the possible mediating role that mindfulness might play during stressful events and depression. The international students surveyed were said to be more at risk of the experience of stress and depression due to their requirement to adapt to a new culture in addition to the new educational setting. Self-report questionnaires were given to 260 international students in China with a median age of 21.4 years. They found that many international students showed depressive symptoms and that these were often linked to stressful life events with an evident amount of perceived change. The 8 week intervention programme is said to have significantly reduced the depressive symptoms, and also related to a positive coping style. Gu et al (2020) suggest that their research indicates that mindfulness training might be beneficial to international students when adapting to their new environment, though without a control group being used in this

research, it may be challenging to make absolute claims. Nonetheless, it could be possible that mindfulness might support some individuals in developing a positive coping style, which may be advantageous to those transitioning to secondary school in an intercultural context.

Another recent study was carried out by Altinyelken et al (2020) who sought to improve psychosocial wellbeing among international students at a Dutch university. Perchance similarly to those international students transitioning from primary to secondary school, Altinyelken et al (2020) stated that international students face additional challenges when transitioning to university, such as language barriers, culture shock, the loss of a stable support network, increased negative emotion in relation to the large number of changes and more. They had 15 students (seven female and three male) from a variety of international backgrounds complete a mindfulness programme that was adapted to better suit university students. For instance, there was an increased focus on stress management and self-compassion. Interviews and observations were used to collect data with regards to the effects of the intervention. All students reported positive outcomes, although those who completed the homework assignments regularly reported better outcomes. Increased self-awareness, self-care and positive attitudes towards others was reported. Improved emotion regulation was also reported, yet this was described by some as a less strong effect. Especially relevant to the context of cultural adaptation, students reported being more caring and compassionate towards others, with a more polite and patient attitude towards them. Unfortunately there was some attrition in that two students dropped out of the study before it finished, which could indicate that the programme was not suitable for some (Altinyelken et al, 2020). Without a control group it might be difficult to assess whether the attrition was related to the intervention, whether the time commitment was not practical, or another reason. Yet, this research could support the notion that mindfulness might aid students transitioning to secondary school and in intercultural context in terms of self-awareness, self-care and perhaps aiding their capacity for positive behaviour towards others.

Wu and Buchanan (2018) studied 38 first year Chinese international students adapting to the culturally different environment of a mid-western US university. They particularly explored mindfulness during stress events. They had participants complete an online survey

on trait mindfulness, and complete a daily diary report for two weeks about their experiences of stress, coping, subjective vitality and state mindfulness. However, eight students did not complete the daily diary recordings and their data were removed. Their results depicted that mindfulness predicted less perceived stress, less emotional suppression and greater direct action. Less perceived stress, less emotional suppression and greater direct action also appeared to mediate the relationship between state mindfulness and their perception of their ability to live, grow and develop (vitality). Wu and Buchanan (2018) noted that emotional suppression may be adaptive in the moment, but maladaptive on a long-term basis. Although the sample size was relatively low and the attrition relatively high, some thoughts could come to mind as a result of these findings, namely that lowered stress and actively experiencing emotions (as opposed to suppressing them) might allow the individual to perceive their ability to live, grow and develop more positively. This approach could possibly aid students transitioning to secondary school in an intercultural context.

Perera-Diltz and Greenidge (2018) proposed that mindfulness techniques could be taught to increase culturally appropriate engagement, perhaps helping people deal with transitions that involve cultural differences. They suggested that the areas in which mindfulness might help were "(a) increased emotional awareness (Baer et al., 2004); (b) greater emotional regulation (Britton, Shahar, Szepsenwol, & Jacobs, 2012; Keng et al., 2011); (c) improved behavioural regulation (Keng et al., 2011); (d) improved social competence (Schonert-Reichl & Lawlor, 2010); (e) less defensiveness in students when confronted with differing perspectives and values (Niemiec et al., 2010); (f) higher levels of warmth and acceptance of individuals with differing backgrounds (Gervais & Hoffman, 2012); (g) increased knowledge of inequities and self-awareness (Ross, 2010); (h) increased awareness of inner experience and ability to manage inner chatter, as well as a better awareness of the client as a person (Tarrasch, 2014); and (i) improved effectiveness in working with clients from diverse backgrounds (Ivers, Johnson, Clarke, Newsome, & Berry, 2016)." (p494, Perera-Diltz and Greenidge, 2018). Moreover, mindfulness may reduce how much individuals automatically assign stereotypical assumptions to others, which could improve communication (Lustig and Koester, 2010). That is, Lustig and Koester (2010) discuss the related literature and note that poor communication between people of different cultures can often occur when someone is not open to new information and tolerant of differences.

Behaviour that is perhaps due to a cultural difference could be seen therefore as socially deviant, rather than an alternative approach to a social situation (Lustig and Koester, 2010).

Further to this,Tuleja (2014) focused on business students who were required to interact competently in cultures other than their own. They discuss how self-awareness and emotional intelligence is key for this skill, which may be related to mindfulness. They explored how mindful reflection might facilitate the intercultural learning of a group of MBA students studying global leadership during a cross-cultural immersion experience in China. They analysed student papers using a coding scheme for reflection, searching particularly for evidence of mindful reflection. Researchers suggested that students increased their level of mindfulness during this course and hoped that this had also meant that their cultural sensitivity had increased (Tuleja, 2014). However, it may be wise to consider that Tuleja (2014) did not attempt to specifically measure the level of mindfulness of participants, so these conclusions could be described as subjective interpretations as opposed to evidenced claims. Nonetheless, this research might further support the idea that mindfulness might be relevant when considering interventions for those experiencing an intercultural transition.

Burgoon et al (2000) discuss the potential of mindfulness when people interact cross-culturally. They put forward that effective intercultural communication may require mindful attention. That is, mindful interactions might lead to more effective and enjoyable interactions whilst mindless communication could involve misinterpretations, misunderstandings and potentially conflict. This is said to develop as individuals practise mindfulness over time. To be mindful during these interactions is said to involve active and fluid information processing, sensitivity to context and the existence of more than one perspective, and the ability to identify new differences between themselves and others (Langer, 1989, cited in Burgoon et al, 2000). The alternative mindless approach would be to go into auto-pilot during the interaction, which might not be appropriate in an intercultural circumstance where adaptation could be necessary. Burgoon et al (2000) found that some attempt to identify what is similar between individuals during intercultural interactions may overlook important differences. Mindfulness may instead help people to identify important differences, non-judgmentally, and perhaps adapt accordingly. Moreover, Arasaratnam (2016) discusses theories surrounding the challenges of intercultural communication when

people from different environments come together. Arasaratnam (2016) emphasises that the ability to be mindful and manage anxiety caused by the uncertainty in these interactions are key. This research might suggest that students transitioning to secondary school in an intercultural context might find themselves more socially capable in the intercultural interactions that they have.

One larger study conducted by Tzu-Ping and Wei-Wen (2017) focused on international students in Taiwan, who are increasing in numbers. Their concern was with their psychological well-being during their stay in Taiwan. 110 international students studying in Taiwan completed self-report questionnaires that questioned their capacity to adapt to the new environment and a Mindful Attention Awareness Scale. Tzu-Ping and Wei-Wen (2017) suggest, based on their results, that students may benefit from implementing a mindfulness practice into their lives to aid them with their adjustment to their new cultural environments. Literature on this topic is not limited to students however. Firstly, Charoensukmongkol (2020) used surveys to research the adaptive selling behaviour of 365 Thai salespeople who were assigned to work at international trade shows in foreign countries. Based on their results, Charoensukmongkol (2020) put forward that trait mindfulness may play a facilitating role in the capacity to adapt to a culturally different environment. In turn, the capacity to adapt had a significant positive relationship with adaptive selling behaviours. Adaptive selling behaviour was also related to their international sales performance. This research might be seen to be in line with the idea that mindfulness could assist with transition in an intercultural context.

Moreover, Kaufman and Hwang (2015) carried out a case study of two French banking institutions operating in the US, incorporating participant observations, primary public and private documentation sources, archival records, secondary data and open ended interviews. Their focus was on the ability to adapt to culturally different environments and three particular facets of mindfulness; empathy, open-mindedness and using all senses. The relationship between mindfulness, cross-cultural knowledge and cross-cultural behavioural ability were explored. They found that the two organisations illustrate a similar emphasis on cross-cultural knowledge, but exhibit differences in cross-cultural behavioural ability. Kaufman and Hwang (2015) judged that these differences may be related to the

mindfulness components of empathy, open-mindedness and using all senses. They suggested that mindfulness training in globally diverse workplaces may aid with the necessary intercultural communication that needs to occur for these organisations to succeed. Although interesting, such results might need to be explored further given that the sample size of this research consisted of only two organisations. Yet, the possibility of mindfulness aiding with students who are attempting to build and maintain relationships in an intercultural context could be supported here, particularly considering evidence provided by Thomas (2006).

Thomas (2006) discusses the capacity to adapt to a culturally different environment in relation to mindfulness, stating that it may be a key component that links knowledge with behavioural capability. Mindfulness is said to increase our awareness of our own assumptions, ideas, and emotions with practice. This might relate to individuals having a better understanding of the person they are communicating with. They could be seen to see a situation from multiple viewpoints with a non-judgmental and open mind, whilst being able to be attentive to the context of a situation in order to form a better understanding of what is happening. Using this increased awareness and attention might aid the individual in creating a new mental map of the circumstance that they are in. Additionally, by using mindfulness during intercultural communication an individual could have more control over their response by utilising knowledge that is relevant to the focus of attention, choosing to respond intentionally as opposed to automatically and thus perchance inhibiting or editing undesirable responses (Thomas, 2006). Thus, it could be possible that mindfulness may aid with social skills in an intercultural context.

2.18 Mindfulness and Young People

This thesis focuses upon students who are transitioning from a primary to secondary school in an intercultural context. Yet no literature was found specifically tackling mindfulness aiding in the transition from primary to secondary school. However, Burke (2010) assessed what research had been done up until the stated time with regards to mindfulness and children or adolescents. A suggestion was made that mindfulness-based interventions have been shown to be feasible with this age-group, but that more robust and larger scale research

should be done to expand the body of research looking at how they might be used. Sample sizes ranged from one to 228 among the studies analysed and the ages ranged from four to 19 years. Nine studies researched samples that involved a particular health issue, whilst six contained non-clinical participants. The type of interventions varied and multiple were adapted to be more appropriate to the context of their research. Burke (2010) noticed that very few studies used an intervention and control group, or randomisation for the selection of these, which could prevent researchers from generalising their results. One study by Napoli et al (2005, cited in Burke, 2010) did conduct a mindfulness-based-intervention (MBI) randomised control trial (RCT) with 228 non-clinical first to third grade students that consisted of twelve 45 minute sessions over a 24 week period. They found significant improvements in self-rated test anxiety, teacher rated attention, social skills and visual attention. Burke (2010) suggested that Napoli et al's research design and comparatively large sample size could depict a stronger than usual methodology, yet there may have been the possibility of bias in the teacher ratings as they were aware of which students were in the intervention and control groups.

Another study discussed by Burke was Le et al's (2008, cited in Burke, 2010) trial of a 12 week MBI with 25 non-clinical children between 9 and 12 years of age. They did not however use a control group. Students were taught the MBI by experienced mindfulness instructors. They found that it was challenging to measure changes post intervention. External non-desirable behaviours reported by parents were said to have reduced, but internal behaviours and self-report measures did not depict change. Burke (2010) put forward that this study was limited by their lack of randomisation or control group, small sample and reliance on parent or self-ratings. It is also stated that the MBI involved strategies normally used for clinical individuals rather than non-clinical, which could question how appropriate it was. The children did however give positive reports of their experience of the intervention and it was said that this MBI was feasible and acceptable for children in this age range.

Furthermore, Beauchemin et al (2008) implemented a teacher-led 5-10 minute mindfulness meditation practice at the beginning of each lesson for five weeks with 34 volunteer students with learning difficulties attending a special needs school who were aged 13-18 years old.

This research design included a control group that engaged in in-class nondisruptive activities. Teachers had no prior experience with mindfulness meditation, but received two and three quarter hours of training. Self-rated anxiety and social skills and teacher rated social skills and academic achievement all saw significant differences post-test. However, the context of this study was perhaps especially specific, a causal relationship between the MBI and variables measured cannot be claimed, and bias could have influenced the results. Nonetheless, Burke's (2010) research may help to illustrate the interest that has been shown in implementing MBIs with children and adolescents, the feasibility of researching it and the possibly positive influence they could have.

Semple et al (2009) conducted an RCT with regards to mindfulness by implementing a mindfulness-based-cognitive therapy (MBCT) intervention with 25 children ages 9-13 years old. The aim of the intervention was to increase social-emotional resiliency. The sample consisted of children mostly from low-income, inner-city households and 21 out of the 25 students were ethnic minorities. The methodology also included a three-month follow up of the children who completed the first trial. Semple et al (2009) analysed the participants using the Child Behaviour Checklist, State-Trait Anxiety Inventory for Children, and a Multidimensional Anxiety Scale for Children. The intervention group is said to have depicted fewer attention problems than the control group, and that these differences were maintained at three months following the intervention. In addition, as attention problems appeared to decrease, so did behavioural problems. Those who originally reported clinically elevated levels of anxiety at pre-test also illustrated significant reductions in anxiety symptoms. Overall, Semple et al (2009) judged that their intervention may be particularly beneficial for reducing anxiety in children. As anxiety may be a key challenge during the transition from primary to secondary school, this potential effect might be advantageous.

Napoli et al (2004) presented their results from a mindfulness training programme on first, second and third grade students' outcomes on measures of attention. They implemented a 24-week training programme that included focusing on the breath, body scan, movement and sensorimotor awareness activities. They claimed that their results from three attentional measures given to participants showed significant differences between those who did and did not participate in the intervention. Additionally, Mendelson et al (2010) suggested that

urban, low socio-economic communities may experience more stress and be at a higher risk of social-emotional difficulties, behaviour problems and poor academic performance compared to more affluent communities. Mindfulness-based approaches are said to perhaps be a way to aid these individuals by possibly enhancing their self-regulatory abilities. They conducted a pilot RCT whereby a 12 week MBI that involved a mindfulness yoga intervention was implemented. Fundamentally, their sample included 97 year 5 and 6 age students. Findings illustrated that the intervention was attractive to students, teachers and administrators and that undesirable effects of stress such as rumination, intrusive thoughts and emotional arousal were reduced. Given this research, it might be possible to suggest that mindfulness may allow for individuals to calm themselves and become less driven by emotion and perhaps more able to behave in a self-determined manner.

2.19 Mindfulness and Emotional Wellbeing

Further research supporting the idea that mindfulness could be beneficial for dealing with negative emotions and self-regulation comes from Sibinga et al (2016). They were also concerned about the potential negative impacts that living in a low socio-economic urban environment could have - including violence, poverty, attending failing educational institutions, substance use, trauma and more. They put forward that mindfulness could improve psychological functioning. It is noted that they implemented a MBI focused on stress reduction with 300 randomly assigned participants from two Baltimore City Public Schools ranging from year 6 to year 9. 99.7% of the sample were African American and 99% were eligible for free school meals. Self-report survey data was collected after the intervention. Post-intervention, the intervention students portrayed significantly lowered depressive symptoms, negative affect, undesirable coping strategies, rumination, self-hostility and posttraumatic stress symptom severity when compared to the control group (Sibinga et al, 2016).

 What is more, researchers Schonert-Reichl et al (2015) studied the implementation of a social and emotional learning (SEL) programme that included mindfulness with elementary school students, hoping to improve cognitive control, reduce stress, promote well-being and pro-social behaviour and improve academic performance. Their sample included 99 year 5

and 6 students who were randomly assigned to the intervention and they measured their executive functions, stress physiology (by way of salivary cortisol), well-being (by way of self-reports), pro-social behaviour and peer acceptance (by way of peer reports) and their maths grades. They found that the intervention students improved their cognitive control and stress physiology, reported greater empathy and emotional control, depicted greater decreases in self-reported symptoms of depression and peer-related aggression, were rated by peers as more prosocial, and had increased in peer acceptance (Schonert-Reichl et al, 2015). Considering that it could be possible that mindfulness may aid peer acceptance, this may indicate a possible advantage for mindfulness interventions with TCK students transitioning from primary to secondary school in an intercultural context.

Additionally, the importance of mindfulness interventions may have become even more pronounced due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which exacerbated feelings of uncertainty and instability. This pandemic, like other crises, highlights the necessity of exploring effective strategies to support TCKs during periods of heightened anxiety. By examining this and other potential crises, we can better understand the critical role of interventions that support mental health during challenging times. This thesis aims to explore the perceptions and experiences of teachers and administrators who have implemented mindfulness practices with TCKs attending international schools, particularly those transitioning between primary and secondary school. The prevention effects on stress and well-being were found directly after the training, but became more apparent at the follow up stage. A reduction in mental health problems also became apparent at follow-up. Students and parents reported positive effects on stress, well-being and behaviour. Weijer-Bergsma et al (2012) suggest that the implementation of mindfulness into elementary schools at a class level could lead to a benefit for the stress and well-being of the children. One aspect of the transition from primary to secondary school is the requirement to build new relationships with peers. Students who behave in a socially positive manner may find this more achievable than those who depict anti-social behaviour.

Rempel (2012) reviewed the literature relevant to the implementation of mindfulness in schools. Upon their analysis, they suggest that the benefits of using mindfulness in school settings are potentially significant, particularly in terms of cognitive, emotional, interpersonal,

and spiritual areas. Other areas that could improve amongst children and adolescents from mindfulness are academic performance, psychological well-being, self-esteem and social skills. Evidence suggests, according to Rempel (2012) that mindfulness-based training in schools is feasible and acceptable. They support the notion that more well-designed studies would be useful to build a better understanding as to how mindfulness might be used in schools. Rempel (2012) describes that mindfulness could particularly aid children and adolescents in building strategies for dealing with life's more challenging moments.

2.20 Mindfulness and Bullying

One of the potential challenges for some when transitioning from primary to secondary school is bullying. Foody and Samara (2018) put forward that bullying may have a significant impact on the mental health of students. They also suggested that mindfulness could be a tool that schools could use to alleviate distress associated with being involved with bullying. Leland (2015) may support this notion as they suggested that mindfulness could build self-awareness and self-control. They cite Broderick and Jennings (2012) who outline that negative learned behaviours that do not play out well in a school environment can become automatic responses to emotional distress; for example, reacting to distress with anger. Mindfulness could help students to learn new and perhaps healthier responses as it may assist them in increasing the time between their impulses and their actions. Faraji et al (2019) implemented a mindfulness intervention and found that mindfulness helped to reduce the degree to which students would exclude others from a group of friends. Liu et al (2022) conducted a cluster randomised controlled trial whereby mindfulness was implemented to see whether it would influence bullying behaviour. They found that mindfulness was positively associated with self-control, mindfulness increased post-test and bullying behaviour decreased significantly. It may be possible therefore to suggest that mindfulness may have the potential to reduce bullying behaviour and/or perhaps aid those who have experienced it with their distress.

Another more recent study by Liu, Xiao, and Tang (2021) examined the impact of a school-based mindfulness intervention on bullying behaviours among teenagers, focusing on the mediating effect of self-control. Conducted over 10 weeks, the Mindfulness in School

Project (MiSP) involved students from four Senior 2 classes in China. Two classes underwent the mindfulness intervention, while the other two served as control groups. The intervention included weekly 45-minute sessions on various mindfulness topics and daily meditation practices. Pre- and post-intervention assessments were conducted using the Chinese Version of the Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire, the Self-Control Scale, and the Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire.

Results demonstrated significant improvements in mindfulness and self-control among participants who underwent the intervention, along with a substantial reduction in bullying behaviours by approximately 22%. The control group showed no significant changes (Liu, Xiao and Tang (2021). The findings suggested that mindfulness could enhance emotional regulation and self-awareness, reducing the likelihood of bullying by promoting non-reactive and non-judgmental responses to stressors. However, the study had limitations, including the lack of long-term follow-up to assess the durability of the intervention's effects and the potential influence of external variables not controlled for in the study.

These findings collectively could be said to support the idea that mindfulness practices may be used during the transition from primary to secondary school in an intercultural context, as they can potentially mitigate the negative impacts of bullying and potentially encourage healthier emotional and social responses among students from diverse backgrounds.

2.21 Exploring the Pandemic's Influence on Student Transitions and Support Needs

Examining the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on students may provide valuable insights into the challenges they encountered during this period. This section explores how the sudden transition to online learning and reduced social interactions affected students' mental health and educational experiences.

The response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which began in 2019, could be described to have significantly influenced the lives of students. Most notable perhaps, is that a large number of schools switched to online learning in what could be described as a particularly short period of time. This means that the environment of the students changed from attending lessons/lectures at school or on campus, and would study in isolation at home. Koris et al

(2021) explored international university students' perceptions of the transition to online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. Fourteen semi-structured interviews took place. The reduced social interaction was reported to be perhaps the largest challenge faced by the students. In addition, students were found to be lacking cultural knowledge and insights that typically arise from attending face-to-face lectures on campus at university internationally. Student engagement was found by Walker and Koralesky (2021) to be largely lower after the transition to online learning during the pandemic. In particular, the students who preferred connecting with peers and instructors through in-class discussions found their engagement decreasing. Students who preferred to listen to lectures, read course materials and review slides, on the other hand, found their engagement increased.

It is possible that during this time students may have received less support from their teachers. For example, Murphy et al (2020) studied the perceptions of college students with regards to having to transition to an online learning environment during the pandemic. Students expressed negative emotions like uncertainty and anxiety during the transition. A particular theme was lack of communication with teachers and students and a lack of clarity. Instructor support was said to be fundamental with regards to the transition. Pownall et al (2022) considered closely how best to support the cohort of incoming undergraduate students during the pandemic. One key consideration was how to re-introduce the students to a formal face-to-face education environment. Mental health, however, was a key focus due to the potential increase in depression and anxiety, as well as a lack of social interaction. Additionally, it was noted that these students had not had adequate opportunities to learn the norms, values and general culture of their institutions, as well as develop the appropriate skills learned at university. These insights are particularly relevant for international schools, where the lack of in-person support and cultural integration during the pandemic could have further amplified challenges for students adjusting to new educational and social environments.

To fully grasp the challenges faced by students moving from primary to secondary education during the pandemic, it is important to consider the significant influence of mental health issues exacerbated by lockdowns and online learning transitions. Mental health might be considered a key consideration when looking at the possible influence of the pandemic

lockdowns. Lemay (2021) conducted surveys with students about their perceptions of online learning before and after the transition to online learning during the pandemic. Overall satisfaction with academic outcomes was reported, but reports regarding mental health were less positive. Students reported increased stress and anxiety, as well as difficulty concentrating. The challenges of isolation and social distancing were particularly noted in relation to this. Additionally, developing adaptability skills could be useful to consider. Besser et al (2022) conducted a study with over one thousand college students in Israel. They explored the reactions of the students to transitioning to online learning during the pandemic. Overall, the reactions were negative. Adaptability was found to be a potentially fundamental aspect to navigating the transition in a positive manner. Those who reported greater feelings of belonging and mattering were associated with a higher capacity for adaptability. Understanding these mental health challenges may be fundamental for developing effective support strategies for students transitioning between educational stages, particularly in an intercultural context impacted by the pandemic.

What is more, it may be important to consider that those who were already undergoing a transition to a new school could have found this experience especially challenging. In a recent study by Grey et al (2021) at the Institute of Education at University College London the possible effects of the disruption to students transitioning to secondary school in the UK education system during the pandemic were explored. They used a combination of surveys and semi-structured interviews with a sample of 196 children and 64 teachers across a variety of regions and socio-economic status in England. It was reported that there had been a fragmentation of learning, meaning some children were making more than expected progress, whilst others could be described to have been falling behind. The latter students were often linked to deprivation. Students described an increase in anxiety with regards to their education, as well as, concerns regarding their peer relationships at school. Moreover, Tsegay et al (2023) recently conducted a study looking at the primary to secondary transition support that was available during the pandemic. Their findings suggested that a significant amount of support that would normally be in place, was not available during the pandemic response period. Those that were running were reported to be disrupted, for example being held online instead of face-to-face. Tsegay et al (2023) express concerns with regards to the possibility that the disruption caused during the pandemic to the transition of primary to

secondary pupils in the UK could have consequences for their confidence, mental health and achievement.

Finally, Nyari (2021) studied first year university students in South Africa, who were described in this research as undergoing a 'double transition', due to the transition to university coinciding with the pandemic lockdowns and thus a move to online learning. Nyari (2021) warns that there may be a mental health crisis amongst university students in South Africa. This is said to be due to having experienced a prolonged sense of fear, alongside increased anxiety, depression and stress. It is advised that higher education institutions consider the mental health of their students carefully in the coming years. Bagnall et al (2022) may be seen to agree with this concept, as they also suggest that those first year students who went through a double transition require specifically concentrated attention with regards to mental health services, that universities in South Africa may consider how many counsellors they have available and that the government consider how much mental health support is available to citizens.

Adegboye et al. (2021) investigated the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic-related lockdown on mental health in vulnerable young children. The study focused on primary school children identified as at-risk for mental health issues. Data was collected before the pandemic and re-assessed during the lockdown through video calls. The results showed significant increases in anxiety and mental health problems among these children, which was found particularly to be due to increased financial stress and parental mental health issues during the lockdown. Financial strain was found to indirectly exacerbate children's mental health problems through its negative impact on parental mental health. These findings highlight the compounded effects of socio-economic stressors on already vulnerable populations during the pandemic (Adegboye et al., 2021).

YoungMinds (2020) conducted a survey to understand the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on young people with existing mental health needs. The survey included 2,036 participants aged 13-25 and revealed that the pandemic significantly worsened mental health issues for a majority of respondents. Specifically, 80% of young people reported that the pandemic had negatively affected their mental health, with 41% stating it had made their

mental health "much worse." The increased feelings of anxiety, isolation and a loss of coping mechanisms were prevalent among the participants. Additionally, 87% of respondents felt lonely or isolated during the lockdown, even though 71% had managed to stay in touch with friends. This highlights the profound impact of social restrictions on young people's mental well-being (YoungMinds, 2020).

Among those who had been receiving mental health support prior to the pandemic, 31% were no longer able to access this support, exacerbating their mental health struggles. The study also noted that 11% of respondents experienced an improvement in their mental health, attributing this to the absence of daily pressures such as bullying and academic stress. The findings underscore the possible need for targeted mental health support for young people, emphasising the importance of continued access to mental health services during crises (YoungMinds, 2020). These findings highlight the critical importance of maintaining consistent mental health support for young people, especially during crises that disrupt their usual support networks and routines. Addressing these needs is essential for mitigating long-term mental health issues and ensuring students can navigate educational transitions successfully, even amidst unprecedented challenges.

2.22 Mindfulness-Based Interventions During crisis (the COVID-19 Pandemic)

The unexpected arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic may be said to have influenced global mental health, possibly exacerbating issues such as stress, anxiety and depression. In response to these challenges, mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs) have gained some attention for their potential to alleviate psychological distress.

Given that the pandemic was an arguably recent event for a crisis of its scale, there is a limited amount of research specifically on the topic of mindfulness during that time. However, there are some studies that have demonstrated the potential of mindfulness in reducing psychological symptoms during the crisis.

For instance, Farris et al. (2021) explored the potential of online mindfulness programmes to address psychological distress during COVID-19, highlighting significant improvements in mental health among participants. The study involved a structured online mindfulness

intervention aimed at reducing anxiety, depression and stress, specifically tailored for individuals impacted by the pandemic. Participants engaged in various mindfulness practices, including meditation and mindful breathing exercises, delivered through an accessible online platform. The results demonstrated that those who consistently participated in the mindfulness sessions reported substantial reductions in their levels of psychological distress, indicating the effectiveness of online mindfulness interventions in enhancing mental well-being during the pandemic. This adaptability of mindfulness suggests that such interventions could be valuable in addressing psychological distress should a situation of similar magnitude occur again in the future.

However, the study had limitations, lacking a long-term follow-up to assess the sustainability of the mental health improvements over time. Another limitation was the potential self-selection bias, as participants who chose to engage in the mindfulness programme might have already had a predisposition towards or prior experience with mindfulness practices, which could influence the outcomes. Despite these limitations, the study provides valuable insights into the potential benefits of online mindfulness interventions during times of widespread psychological stress. Therefore, it depicts the importance of such interventions in addressing the challenges associated with transitioning from primary to secondary international school, particularly for Third Culture Kids (TCKs) and other vulnerable groups.

Similarly, Zhu et al. (2021) found that mindfulness practice helped protect mental health during the pandemic by enhancing emotional regulation and resilience. Their study involved a comprehensive mindfulness programme where participants engaged in regular mindfulness exercises such as meditation, body scanning and mindful breathing. These practices aimed to improve participants' awareness and acceptance of their thoughts and emotions, thereby fostering better emotional regulation and resilience against stressors. The results showed that participants who practised mindfulness reported lower levels of anxiety and depression and higher levels of emotional stability and resilience, which helped them cope better with the uncertainties and stress brought by the pandemic.

The study is not without its limitations. One notable limitation was the reliance on self-reported measures, which are susceptible to biases such as social desirability or inaccurate self-assessment. Additionally, the absence of a control group complicates the ability to attribute the observed benefits solely to the mindfulness intervention. Furthermore, the cross-sectional design of the study limits the ability to draw conclusions about the long-term effects of mindfulness practice on mental health. Despite these limitations, the study provides important evidence supporting the role of mindfulness in enhancing mental health during challenging times.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, due to the nature of having to lockdown during the pandemic, the shift to online delivery of mindfulness programmes has been particularly notable. Traditional face-to-face mindfulness sessions became impractical due to social distancing measures, prompting a transition to digital platforms. Liu et al. (2021) conducted a systematic review and meta-analysis, revealing that online MBIs were effective in reducing symptoms of depression, anxiety and stress during the pandemic. This transition not only made mindfulness practices more accessible but also demonstrated their flexibility and adaptability in times of crisis.

Online mindfulness interventions could offer some particular advantages. They are easily accessible, allowing individuals to participate from any location without disrupting their daily routines. Furthermore, they can be more cost-effective and scalable compared to traditional in-person sessions. Participants can access resources at their convenience, which enhances retention and engagement (Liu et al., 2021). This accessibility could be especially beneficial during times of crisis whereby face-to-face appointments and practices are more challenging to uphold.

Furthermore, a study by Dai et al. (2021) in China designed an online mindfulness-based intervention specifically for COVID-19 patients. The intervention aimed to improve mental health and quality of life through a series of structured mindfulness exercises, including mindfulness meditation and mindful stretching. Participants were engaged in the programme via a dedicated online platform, which facilitated the delivery of mindfulness content and allowed for regular interaction and feedback. The intervention was comprehensive,

consisting of multiple sessions over several weeks, each focusing on different aspects of mindfulness practice to enhance emotional regulation and resilience.

The results of the study indicated significant benefits for participants in terms of emotional regulation and coping with the psychological symptoms caused by the virus. Participants reported reduced levels of anxiety and depression, improved mood and a greater sense of emotional stability. These improvements were attributed to the mindfulness practices that helped individuals to manage their thoughts and emotions more effectively, thereby reducing the overall psychological burden imposed by COVID-19.

Another study by Wells et al. (2021) involved a non-randomized clinical trial with 233 participants from around the world. The study found that a single 15-minute online mindfulness meditation session significantly reduced stress, anxiety and COVID-19-related concerns. These findings underscore the potential of even brief mindfulness practices to provide meaningful psychological relief during periods of heightened stress.

The integration of mindfulness into educational settings during the pandemic has also been explored. Mindfulness interventions in schools have been shown to support students' mental health, helping them cope with the disruptions caused by COVID-19. Antonova et al. (2021) discussed how mindfulness-based approaches could mitigate the mental health crisis induced by the COVID-19 pandemic, emphasising their role in fostering resilience among students. The study examined the heightened stress and anxiety levels in students due to abrupt transitions to remote learning and social isolation. Mindfulness-based approaches, such as Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) and Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT), were found to significantly improve emotional regulation and reduce anxiety.

Participants in the study engaged in activities like guided meditation and mindful breathing, which helped them develop better coping mechanisms. The results showed that students who practised mindfulness reported lower levels of psychological distress and higher resilience. However, the study noted limitations such as variability in programme implementation and reliance on self-reported data, which might introduce bias. Despite

these challenges, the researchers advocated for the broader adoption of mindfulness practices in educational settings to support student well-being during crises.

Overall, the COVID-19 pandemic might be argued to have highlighted the potential need for accessible and effective mental health interventions. Mindfulness-based practices, particularly through online platforms, have emerged as a valuable tool in addressing the psychological challenges posed by the pandemic. As the world continues to navigate the aftermath of the pandemic, integrating mindfulness into daily routines and institutional practices could provide ongoing support for mental health and well-being.

The exploration of mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs) during the COVID-19 pandemic illustrates their potential benefits for students, especially during school transitions. The positive effects of MBIs in reducing stress and anxiety, and improving emotional regulation, suggest that incorporating these practices into school programmes could support students' mental well-being. The shift from offline to online learning itself may be considered a type of transition, for which mindfulness has been shown to be arguably beneficial. Online platforms may provide a standardised quality of delivery that ensures consistency and accessibility, which can be particularly advantageous compared to face-to-face interactions where variability in implementation may occur dependent on resources and training. The adaptability of mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs), capable of functioning both offline and online, underscores their utility in providing continuous mental health support during critical periods.

2.23 The Impact of Mindfulness on Mental Health During Pandemic Lockdowns

Given the strain that the pandemic and its associated response measures, such as lockdowns, have had on mental health, some researchers have been investigating the potential role of mindfulness during these specific crises. Exploring the impact of mindfulness during lockdowns could provide valuable insights into its effectiveness in managing stress and promoting mental well-being in similarly restrictive and isolating situations. For example, Zhang and Shen (2023) researched university students in China with regards to their mental health during the pandemic. They found that dispositional mindfulness may have helped to moderate the strain that the lockdowns could have had on

mental health. That is, those with a higher level of dispositional mindfulness appeared to be significantly better protected. This was said to be particularly the case for men when compared to women. Kock et al (2021) explored the possible reason why mindfulness might aid with the additional pressure on mental health during lockdowns. They found that it could be the de-centring (the process of stepping outside of one's own mental events, perhaps leading to an objective and non-judging stance towards the self) aspect of mindfulness that may be associated with decreased worry and stress, improved mental health and an increase in social connectedness with others.

Godara et al (2021) were concerned that the pandemic may have increased mental health problems such as depression, anxiety, increased loneliness and feelings of disconnectedness from others. They gave participants an online mindfulness mental training intervention and found that mindfulness could help to increase social capacities and resilience in participants. Recommendations were made by Godara et al (2021) that it might be advantageous to look at how to implement low-cost interventions at a broader level to perhaps alleviate some of the negative mental health consequences of the pandemic.

Matiz et al (2020) expressed that women may be at particular risk of symptoms of stress, anxiety and depression during the lockdowns in Italy. They assessed 66 female teachers for mindfulness skills, empathy, personality profiles, interoceptive awareness, psychological well-being, emotional distress and burnout levels one month before and one month after the start of lockdowns. In the meantime, they received an 8-week mindfulness intervention. Improvements were reportedly found in depression and psychological wellbeing.

González-García et al (2021) tested the feasibility of a brief online mindfulness intervention. They found positive indications that the intervention could be useful for promoting mental health among university students during the pandemic. They do however recommend that further research be done due to their methodology having some limitations. Witaro et al (2022) also suggested that online mindfulness interventions could be beneficial when attempting to tackle the mental health problems that may arise from lockdowns. As face-to-face mindfulness training and interventions might not be available during such times, developing online alternatives may help to bridge that gap. They also suggest that follow-up

research could be beneficial in establishing whether online mindfulness interventions could be advantageous.

2.24 Criticisms and Possible Challenges with Mindfulness

Although there is a large amount of research that suggests mindfulness could be a positive influence for some, there has also been evidence that was less supportive. Dunning et al (2022) noticed that Mindfulness Based Interventions (MBIs) were increasingly being implemented with young people with the intention of improving mental health. They analysed published and unpublished randomly controlled trials of MBIs with participants who were younger than 19 years old. It was found that MBIs were most effective with reducing anxiety/stress and improving mindfulness. However, with studies that had follow-ups there were no significantly positive effects of the MBIs. Dunning et al (2022) suggest that, whilst there is evidence of MBIs having a positive effect in some areas, the research is still inconclusive. For example, it's possible that mindfulness could only have a short-term positive effect, so if the practice is stopped the effect may cease too. In a separate piece of research, Dunning et al (2022) looked at mindfulness training, and whether this may have improved young people's ability to control their behaviour despite their emotional experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic. Their evidence did not support the notion that mindfulness training had any particular effect. It was not discussed as to whether this related to the ability/willingness of the young people when learning the technique, or if they were doing mindfulness effectively but not seeing an improvement in their behaviour.

As outlined by Jacobsen et al (2002), originally, mindfulness was a practice that was done in communities and had a specific spiritual, philosophical and cultural context. As the West became interested in mindfulness it was adapted into a more secular and clinical practice. It could be described as unusual therefore to apply mindfulness to individuals almost as a medication, with the suggestion that there will be certain benefits to said individual, as opposed to suggesting practice on a wider scale and considering the possibility of it having a benefit for said community. Qualitative research into Mindfulness Based Interventions (MBIs) has shown that a supportive group is experienced as helpful and therapeutic (Cairns

& Murray, 2015, cited by Jacobsen et al, 2022), but developing a community is rarely regarded as essential (Rich, 2007, cited by Jacobsen et al, 2022).

Individual differences may play an important role in how people engage with and benefit from mindfulness. For example, a Norwegian study of 288 undergraduate psychology and medical students found that those with higher levels of baseline trait neuroticism and conscientiousness showed greater benefits in terms of reduced stress following a Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) course (De Vibe et al., 2015, Jacobsen et al, 2022). Understanding the impact of factors such as trait (e.g. personality) and state (e.g. emotional distress) differences between individuals has important implications for how interventions are designed and implemented (Jacobsen et al, 2022). Therefore, mindfulness may not be as easily implemented as originally thought; variables such as social context and personality traits could influence the impact that it has.

Additionally, there are challenges in translating findings from controlled experiments, focused on specific aspects of mindfulness, into understanding and applying mindfulness in complex interventions in real-world settings (Jacobsen, 2022). Mindfulness is a complex construct involving a range of elements, such as attention training, embodiment of key principles by a well-trained teacher (e.g. non-reactivity), and attitudinal qualities of friendliness and curiosity. Mindfulness Based Interventions also require significant commitment from the individual and repeated practice, often in the face of adversity. Such complexity, and the interaction effects between these elements will necessarily be lost within controlled lab-based experiments, and with this we may risk losing a sense of the 'whole' of mindfulness by reducing it to the 'sum of its parts' (Jacobsen, 2022).

Jacobsen (2022) continues by stating that there is always an implementation gap in healthcare between interventions with an established evidence base in the research literature, and reliable access to them in routine services. This has occurred with mindfulness. It is now widely available e.g. through free or subscription fee apps. Whilst this may bring benefits to those who are unable to connect with established groups and therapies, there is a risk that they may not get as much out of it, yet the process is still given the same name. The so-called 'hype cycle' is a well-known way of understanding how new

'technologies' are regarded over time, with initial success and enthusiasm leading to a 'peak of inflated expectation', often quickly followed by a 'trough of disillusionment'. Although the question as to whether we are in such a cycle with mindfulness, the novelty is perhaps wearing off. For example, criticisms of the overselling and overapplication of mindfulness have begun to emerge. It is possible therefore that some individuals who encounter mindfulness may find the experience unhelpful, which could increase criticism of the practice (Jacobsen, 2022).

Recent research from Gillespie and Harmer (2022) found weak to moderate evidence for mindfulness improving pain tolerance threshold, but no good-quality evidence for reducing pain severity or pain-related distress. Moreover, an RCT conducted by Wielgosz et al (2022) found that mindfulness reduced the Neural Pain Signature (NPS) of intervention participants whilst the control group (who were completing an alternative health programme) did not. However, the subjective experience of pain was not necessarily reduced in the short-term; instead it was found that long-term practitioners of mindfulness experienced a lower subjective amount of pain. A further study by Kuyken et al (2022) evaluated the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of school-based-mindfulness-training (SBMT) compared with teaching-as-usual (TAU). They analysed 85 schools and found no evidence that SBMT was superior to TAU at year 1. They concluded that their findings did not support the superiority of SBMT over TAU in promoting mental health in adolescence.

Baer et al (2021) specifically investigated the potential for mindfulness to have harmful effects given that this could be considered an under-studied area. They looked at the frequency and severity of unpleasant experiences and harm in two nonclinical samples participating in a mindfulness intervention designed for the general public. Their sample included 84 schoolteachers and 74 university students. Both studies were uncontrolled. Participants completed self-report questionnaires about psychological symptoms before and after the 8-week mindfulness course. After the course, participants responded to a survey that included Likert ratings and free-text questions about unpleasant experiences and harm. In both samples, about two-thirds of participants reported unpleasant experiences associated with mindfulness practice during the course. Some participants indicated that difficult experiences led to important learning or were beneficial long-term. The proportion of

participants reporting harm from the mindfulness course ranged from 3 to 7%. The proportion showing reliable deterioration on symptom questionnaires ranged from 2 to 7%. Those reporting harm and those showing reliable deterioration on questionnaires were largely separate subgroups; only one participant fell in both. Baer (2021) subsequently highlights the need for mindfulness teachers to manage expectations about benefits and difficulties that may occur in mindfulness-based programmes and to work skilfully with participants experiencing difficulties.

2.25 Potential Issues with Implementing and Researching Mindfulness

Furthermore, Montero-Marin et al (2021) compared instructor-led and self-taught mindfulness training based on a book (Williams & Penman, 2011) in a sample of secondary school teachers. They assessed the degree to which participants believed the intervention was effective, their programme engagement, well-being and psychological distress, and evaluated whether mindfulness and self-compassion skills acted as mediators of outcomes. In total, 206 teachers from 43 schools were randomised by school to an instructor-led or self-taught course. Both formats showed similar rates of participant expectancy and engagement, but the instructor-led arm was perceived as more credible. The self-taught arm showed significant pre-post improvements in self-compassion and well-being, while the instructor-led arm showed such improvements in mindfulness, self-compassion, well-being, perceived stress, anxiety, depression and burnout. The observed changes lasted longer in those who were instructor led. The instructor-led arm, compared with the self-taught, indirectly improved teacher outcomes by enhancing mindfulness and self-compassion as mediating factors. Thus, whether or not the mindfulness is led by an instructor or self-taught might be a key consideration.

The successful implementation of mindfulness interventions often hinges on understanding the cultural context in which they are applied. For example, Peacock (2014) examined the integration of mindfulness-based interventions into Western mental health care, highlighting both the benefits and challenges of this incorporation. While mindfulness has become widely accepted for both treating mental health issues and enhancing well-being, this integration has sparked mutual suspicion between scientific and Buddhist communities. Practitioners of

empirically-based approaches might be said to often view the Buddhist origins of mindfulness as unnecessary or irrelevant, while some within the Buddhist community criticise these adaptations as what is called the 'dharma light,' implying a dilution of traditional practices. This tension may underscore the existing strain between scientific validation and spiritual traditions in the adoption of mindfulness. The implications of this divide could suggest a need for greater dialogue and understanding between these perspectives to fully harness the potential benefits of mindfulness. This highlights the importance of considering cultural dynamics when implementing mindfulness practices in educational settings, particularly for students transitioning between different cultural environments, as it may enhance their mental well-being and overall adjustment.

Castellanos et al. (2020) conducted a systematic review to evaluate the effectiveness and cultural adaptations of mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs) for Hispanic populations, who represent the fastest-growing ethnic minority in the USA. The review included 22 studies conducted across the USA, Spain and South America, with eight studies subjected to meta-analysis. The findings demonstrated that culturally adapted MBIs were associated with significant improvements in depression symptoms, stress reduction and chronic illness management among Hispanic participants. The meta-analysis indicated a moderate to large effect size of these interventions on reducing psychiatric distress compared to control groups (Castellanos et al, 2020). These findings underscore the importance of culturally adapting mindfulness interventions to effectively support the mental health and well-being of diverse student populations, particularly during educational transitions, thus enhancing their overall resilience and adjustment.

To enhance the relevance and effectiveness of MBIs for Hispanic participants, several cultural adaptations were made. These included delivering interventions in Spanish to ensure language accessibility and modifying the content to incorporate cultural values and traditions relevant to Hispanic communities. Family and community involvement were emphasised, reflecting the strong familial ties in Hispanic cultures. Interventions also utilised culturally relevant examples and metaphors, integrated traditional practices, and were delivered through accessible methods such as group sessions, individual counselling and online platforms. These adaptations aimed to improve engagement and outcomes by

71

making the interventions more culturally sensitive and aligned with participants' backgrounds. The study underscores the importance of culturally tailoring psychological therapies to better serve diverse populations (Castellanos et al, 2020).

2.26 Evaluating the Implementation and Efficacy of Mindfulness in Educational Settings

Another consideration with regard to mindfulness is the methodological approach when studying the effects of mindfulness. Davidson and Kaszniak (2015) explored several conceptual and methodological issues in mindfulness and meditation research. One primary challenge is the role of first-person experience, which is difficult to study objectively. The absence of true double-blinding in intervention research poses another issue, as participants and researchers are often aware of the conditions, potentially introducing bias. Additionally, defining appropriate control and comparison groups is complicated and often not present in research, as is the adequate description of mindfulness practices and related training. The measurement of mindfulness itself presents difficulties, particularly when relying on self-report measures, which can be subjective and biassed. The structure of study designs and data analyses also requires careful consideration to ensure validity and reliability. These issues highlight the need for rigorous, well-designed studies to advance the scientific understanding of mindfulness and meditation (Davidson & Kaszniak, 2015).

Moreover, Emerson et al. (2020) conducted a systematic review to evaluate the implementation and efficacy of mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs) in school settings. The review highlighted several methodological issues that have led to mixed findings across studies. One key issue is the significant variation in the content, delivery and training requirements of school-based MBIs, which affects both the fidelity and efficacy of these interventions. The review found that only 45% of studies included core mindfulness practices, and just 26% met the standards for teacher training. These inconsistencies can undermine the integrity of the interventions and make it difficult to compare results across different studies (Emerson et al, 2020).

Moreover, the feasibility of implementing MBIs in schools has not been adequately established. Many feasibility studies have failed to assess organisational factors that

influence implementation, such as school policies, teacher workload and administrative support. This lack of detail and consistency in reporting has disadvantaged the assessment of studies against stringent guidelines, leading to challenges in developing a robust evidence base for school-based MBIs (Emerson et al, 2020).

Additionally, Emerson et al (2020) also noted that despite the claims of many studies, the feasibility and effectiveness of MBIs in school settings remain uncertain. They emphasised the need for more methodologically rigorous research to establish clear standards for the implementation of MBIs in schools. Future research should focus on ensuring intervention integrity, providing comprehensive training for teachers and thoroughly evaluating organisational factors to enhance the implementation and efficacy of mindfulness programmes in educational settings.

Wilde et al. (2019) explored the facilitators and barriers to implementing mindfulness training (MT) in seven secondary/high schools using a qualitative case study design. The study identified four key themes crucial for successful implementation: people, resources, journey and perceptions. It highlighted the importance of having committed individuals and support from school leadership (people), adequate time and financial resources (resources), recognising that implementation is a non-linear process (journey) and ensuring a shared understanding of MT among school staff (perceptions). The study emphasised that these factors are essential for effective MT implementation and highlighted the similarities and differences with other school mental health programmes and healthcare settings. Despite identifying these factors, the study also noted that feasibility has not been fully established, particularly regarding organisational factors that influence implementation. It was suggested by Wilde et al (2019) that future research should focus on addressing these challenges to improve the evidence base for MT in schools.

2.27 Summary

The literature on school transitions suggests that moving from primary to secondary education presents a range of academic, social, and emotional challenges, particularly for internationally mobile students such as Third Culture Kids (TCKs). Research has explored various factors influencing these transitions, including identity formation, cultural adjustment,

and peer relationships, highlighting both the difficulties and the potential opportunities that such experiences may present. Given these complexities, scholars have increasingly considered interventions that might support students in managing transitions more effectively. One such approach, mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs), has been proposed as a means of enhancing emotional regulation and resilience during periods of change. However, while there is some evidence to suggest that mindfulness may be beneficial in school settings, its implementation in international contexts, particularly during the transition to secondary school, remains an area requiring further exploration.

In conclusion, the integration of mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs) into the transition from primary to secondary school in an intercultural context might offer a promising approach to addressing the challenges faced by Third Culture Kids (TCKs). The literature reveals that TCKs experience heightened difficulties during transitions due to their complex cultural identities and frequent relocations, which can lead to increased anxiety, stress and feelings of isolation (Gilbert, 2008; Ezra, 2003). The consistent experience of loss and the need to adapt to new environments can exacerbate these challenges, making the support provided during transitions critical (Limberg & Lambie, 2011).

This literature review identifies mindfulness as a potentially effective tool for aiding Third Culture Kids (TCKs) during transitions. Research suggests that mindfulness can enhance emotional regulation, reduce anxiety and improve social skills - benefits that could be particularly valuable for TCKs navigating new social interactions (Williams & Penman, 2012; Ghorbani et al., 2009). By fostering a non-judgmental awareness of the present moment, mindfulness may help individuals manage their emotional responses to stressors. Additionally, mindfulness practices have the potential to facilitate openness to different cultures by promoting a non-judgmental attitude towards social interactions where differing values or habits are displayed, thereby potentially aiding in smoother transitions for TCKs (Davidson & Kaszniak, 2015). However, it is important to note that the efficacy of mindfulness can vary based on individual differences and contextual factors, and further research is needed to fully understand its impact on TCKs.

Further, the feasibility of implementing MBIs in schools has been a topic of debate. Studies indicate that while MBIs show promise, their effectiveness is often hindered by variations in implementation and a lack of methodological rigour (Emerson et al., 2020). Ensuring intervention integrity and providing comprehensive training for teachers are essential for the successful adoption of MBIs in school settings (Burke, 2010). Moreover, the cultural adaptability of MBIs must be considered, as cultural differences can influence how students perceive and engage with mindfulness practices (Castellanos et al., 2020). To address these challenges, it is crucial to obtain the perceptions of educators, as their insights can provide valuable feedback on practical challenges and contextual factors that affect the implementation of MBIs.

The COVID-19 pandemic has underscored the necessity for accessible and effective mental health interventions. The pre-existing development and implementation of mindfulness programmes proved advantageous, as these interventions could be adapted for online delivery during the global health crisis. This shift has shown potential in addressing the psychological challenges posed in crises like that of the pandemic, as mindfulness practices become more accessible to a broader audience (Liu et al., 2021). Online MBIs have been found to reduce symptoms of depression, anxiety and stress similarly to face to face sessions, demonstrating their flexibility and adaptability in times of crisis (Dai et al., 2021). This highlights the importance of establishing and refining mental health interventions prior to crises, ensuring they can be effectively adapted and deployed when needed.

Despite the promising findings, there are limitations to the current body of research on MBIs and their application in international school transitions. The variability in study designs, sample sizes and cultural contexts makes it difficult to draw definitive conclusions about the effectiveness of MBIs (Davidson & Kaszniak, 2015). Additionally, the reliance on self-report measures and the lack of long-term follow-up studies pose challenges to the generalisability and sustainability of the observed benefits (Emerson et al., 2020).

Future research should address these limitations by employing diverse methodologies, including randomised controlled trials and longitudinal studies, to establish a robust evidence base for the efficacy of MBIs in school settings. While some might argue that these

approaches provide more definitive evidence, it is equally important to recognise the value of interpretivist methods in capturing the nuanced and subjective experiences of educators. Exploring the cultural adaptability of MBIs through qualitative approaches can offer in-depth insights into how these interventions can be effectively tailored to support TCKs during transitions into secondary international schools (Tuleja, 2014). By integrating qualitative research methods, educators and policymakers can better understand how to implement MBIs in a way that meets the diverse needs of students in an increasingly globalised world.

In summary, while the integration of mindfulness into the primary to secondary international school transition for Third Culture Kids (TCKs) holds significant promise, it necessitates careful consideration of implementation strategies and cultural contexts. The potential benefits of mindfulness in enhancing emotional regulation, reducing anxiety and improving social skills are well-documented. However, further research is essential to fully understand and optimise its application in educational settings. As global mobility continues to increase, developing effective interventions to support TCKs during critical transitions will become increasingly important. This is particularly relevant during the primary to secondary transition, a period already identified as challenging due to its impact on young adults' development and adjustment (Bagnall et al, 2022). By focusing on both the practical and cultural adaptability of mindfulness-based interventions, educators can better support TCKs, ensuring their well-being and successful integration in new environments. International schools, given their history and thus responsibility towards fostering inclusive and supportive educational environments, could play a pivotal role in this endeavour. Recognising the evolving challenges that TCKs face is significant, as it illustrates the need for robust, adaptable interventions. Moreover, being prepared for potential future global challenges requires having interventions in place that can effectively address emerging issues, and it is crucial to explore the perceptions of educators to ensure these interventions are relevant and impactful.

The existing literature highlights the complexities of transitioning from primary to secondary school, particularly for Third Culture Kids (TCKs) navigating intercultural contexts. Research on international schools (Hayden & Thompson, 2016; Grimshaw & Sears, 2008) suggests that students in these environments often face challenges related to identity formation,

cultural adaptation, and social belonging, all of which appear to be central to their transition experiences. Furthermore, the transition period is often associated with increased stress, anxiety, and shifts in peer relationships (Lucey & Reay, 2000; Metzner et al., 2020), with studies indicating that students experience difficulties in both academic and social adjustments (Perry, 2013). The literature suggests that maintaining and building relationships is a primary concern during this period (Prat & George, 2005; Rens et al., 2019), which is particularly relevant for TCKs, whose sense of belonging may be disrupted by frequent relocations (Pollock & Van Reken, 2009).

Recent research offers further insight into these challenges. Koini et al. (2023) question the tendency to portray international school transitions as predominantly negative, arguing instead that these transitions should be seen as ongoing and multi-dimensional rather than singular events. Their study suggests that internationally mobile families actively manage and shape their experiences, with some reporting relatively positive outcomes. However, Lijadi and van Schalkwyk (2018) highlight concerns that international schools may not always function as truly international spaces, as changing demographics and school structures may have reduced opportunities for cross-cultural interaction. This is further supported by Wu and Koh (2022), who note that international schools in China increasingly adopt national educational priorities alongside international branding, possibly shifting the way students experience intercultural exposure. Similarly, Young (2023) suggests that while international schooling may be intended to encourage global outlooks, some students maintain strong national identities, raising questions about how these institutions support a truly globalised mindset. This suggests that while international schooling remains a preferred option for many families, its effectiveness in supporting TCK transitions may depend on how schools respond to these evolving dynamics.

Mindfulness has been explored as a possible intervention to support students during transitions, with research suggesting that it may enhance emotional regulation, resilience, and social connectedness (Williams & Penman, 2012; Gärtner, 2013). Studies on mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs) in education indicate that they may reduce stress, improve focus, and aid students in navigating periods of change (Ramler et al., 2016; Dvořáková et al., 2018). Research on international students further suggests that

mindfulness may support cross-cultural adjustment and reduce emotional suppression (Gu et al., 2020; Wu & Buchanan, 2018), reinforcing its potential relevance in an intercultural school setting. However, recent literature raises questions about the adequacy of transition support in international schools. Tretheway and Vanderburg (2022) argue that parental expectations often differ from student realities, as families enrolling in international schools may assume the curriculum and learning environment will closely align with that of their home country. Their study suggests that students may face unexpected linguistic and cultural barriers, even in English-medium schools, where peer interactions may primarily take place in other languages. Ma (2023) further highlights how parents actively strategise when selecting international schools, often aiming to accumulate linguistic and cultural capital for their children. This reinforces the need for structured transition support, as the reality of school environments may not always align with the expectations set by families or school marketing strategies. These findings suggest that international schools could benefit from a more systematic approach to helping students adjust, particularly in relation to how mindfulness interventions could support their adaptation and social integration.

Despite these insights, there remains limited research on how educators perceive and implement mindfulness interventions within international school transitions. Much of the existing literature focuses on the potential benefits of mindfulness for students, but there is little discussion of how international school staff experience and adapt these practices. Tretheway and Vanderburg (2022) highlight the need for greater awareness and preparedness among educators, particularly in developing transition programmes that account for students' linguistic, cultural, and emotional needs. Furthermore, Lijadi and van Schalkwyk (2018) suggest that some international schools may no longer provide the level of intercultural engagement previously assumed, raising questions about how mindfulness interventions might function within these environments. Daw (2024) introduces the concept of 'glocalisation' in international schools, where institutions aim to integrate local educational influences with global curricula. While this approach suggests an intentional balance between local and international perspectives, it may also introduce challenges in ensuring continuity for transitioning TCKs. Similarly, Probert (2023) critiques the British-style international school model, arguing that it often reflects post-colonial influences and may not always adapt effectively to the needs of local and international student bodies. These

perspectives highlight the importance of investigating how mindfulness-based approaches can be implemented in a way that supports TCK transitions while accounting for these institutional variations.

By addressing these gaps, this study aims to explore the perspectives of educators who have implemented mindfulness interventions with students transitioning from primary to secondary school in an intercultural context. Specifically, it seeks to address the following research questions:

What are the experiences of educators who have implemented mindfulness with students transitioning from primary to secondary school in an intercultural context?

What are the perspectives of educators who have implemented mindfulness-based interventions on the impact of mindfulness with students transitioning from primary to secondary school in an intercultural context?

What are the perceptions of educators that have implemented mindfulness with students transitioning from primary to secondary school in an intercultural context in terms of the students' ability to maintain or build new relationships during transition?

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The goal of this research is to explore, in depth, the experiences and perceptions of educators who have implemented mindfulness interventions with students transitioning from primary to secondary school in an international context. To best achieve this, it was decided that a qualitative approach may be more beneficial. I wanted to deeply understand the nuanced and subjective experiences of participants, particularly in the context of TCKs transitioning between educational settings. Throughout this thesis, the term methodology refers to the overall philosophical and strategic approach to the research, while method refers to specific data collection techniques such as interviews. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2011), qualitative research is inherently interdisciplinary and multiparadigmatic, valuing the interpretive understanding of human experiences and the richness of context over generalisability and replicability. This approach allows for the exploration of complex social phenomena in a way that quantitative might not, possibly capturing the intricate dynamics of individual and group experiences. Additionally, qualitative research embraces the diversity of perspectives and methodologies, facilitating a comprehensive examination of the cultural, emotional and social factors influencing the participants' experiences (Lather, 2006). This is particularly relevant for the study at hand, where understanding the personal and cultural contexts of TCKs is essential for developing meaningful insights and interventions. Moreover, considering researcher positionality and reflexivity, as discussed by Holmes (2020), helps to acknowledge and address potential biases, further enhancing the depth and credibility of the research.

The decision was made therefore to conduct a multi-site case study so that I was best able to explore the experiences and perceptions of educators who have implemented mindfulness interventions in an intercultural context. One of the advantages of this approach was that it allowed for exploration across multiple regions of the world. A selection of specific individuals were interviewed who have implemented mindfulness with TCKs transitioning from primary to secondary school in an intercultural context. Gomm et al (2000) define a case study as the documentation of some particular phenomenon or set of events.

Rebolj (2013) outlined that this method could also be seen as a description and analysis of an individual matter or case, whereby the perceived interaction between the participants and the situation are explored such as to potentially further progress in or develop the relevant field.

This exploratory study particularly considered the following research questions:

1) What are the experiences of educators who have implemented mindfulness with students transitioning from primary to secondary school in an intercultural context?
2) What are the perspectives of educators who have implemented mindfulness based interventions on the impact of mindfulness with students transitioning from primary to secondary school in an intercultural context?
3) What are the perceptions of educators that have implemented mindfulness with students transitioning from primary to secondary school in an intercultural context in terms of the students' ability to maintain or build new relationships during transition?

These research questions were chosen to deeply explore the multifaceted impact of mindfulness interventions on students transitioning between educational stages in diverse cultural contexts. Understanding educators' experiences provides practical insights into the implementation process, while their perspectives on the impact of mindfulness inform its effectiveness in supporting student well-being. Additionally, examining educators' perceptions regarding students' relationship-building abilities during transitions offers critical information on the potential social benefits of mindfulness, addressing an essential aspect of student development and adjustment in new environments.

3.2 Research Philosophy and Researcher Positionality

This research adopts an interpretivist approach, focusing on understanding the subjective experiences and insights of individuals who have implemented mindfulness interventions in intercultural educational settings. The qualitative methodology was chosen to allow for in-depth exploration of complex phenomena, capturing the rich, detailed narratives of participants (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This approach is particularly suited for this study as it seeks to uncover the nuanced dynamics of mindfulness practices and their impact on

students transitioning from primary to secondary school (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). By utilising case studies and semi-structured interviews, this research aims to gather comprehensive data that reflect the participants' lived experiences, providing valuable insights that quantitative methods might overlook (Yin, 2018). This methodology aligns with the goals of interpretivist research, which prioritises depth and context over breadth and generalisability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), making it a fitting choice for examining the intricate processes involved in implementing mindfulness interventions.

Acknowledging researcher positionality and philosophical perspectives is perhaps essential for methodological transparency (Simons, 2009; Yin, 2003). As an educator with professional experience in various international school contexts, my background has inevitably influenced the design, data collection, and analysis within this study. Through professional roles supporting students during their transition from primary to secondary education, I developed an interest in mindfulness interventions and their potential impacts on Third Culture Kids (TCKs). These experiences may have heightened my sensitivity towards intercultural educational challenges, potentially shaping my interpretations during the research process.

Epistemologically, this study adopts an interpretivist stance, consistent with the qualitative methodology employed. Interpretivism can be said to recognise that knowledge is generated through subjective interpretations, emphasising the importance of personal meanings attributed by individuals within their specific contexts (Gomm et al., 2000; Yin, 2003). Given the likelihood that educators' perceptions of mindfulness interventions are shaped by their own experiences, beliefs, cultural backgrounds, and institutional contexts, adopting an interpretivist perspective enabled a detailed exploration of these perceptions. Consequently, findings derived from this research should be considered contextually bound, without claims to broad generalisability.

The subjective nature of the interpretivist approach requires ongoing reflexivity to manage potential researcher bias effectively. Throughout the research process, continual critical reflection on my assumptions, detailed documentation of analytical decisions, and careful consideration of alternative viewpoints may have supported methodological rigour and

enhanced the trustworthiness of the findings (Peacock, 2014; Emerson et al., 2020). Additionally, it is my hope that transparently addressing my positionality in this manner could contribute to the overall credibility of the research, possibly providing a balanced representation of the experiences and perceptions explored.

3.3 Trustworthiness

This research could be described as having taken an interpretivist approach. The use of a relatively small sample size in case studies utilising interviews was a deliberate choice to ensure the data captured is rich and detailed. Perhaps some would argue that this approach may reduce the trustworthiness of the findings (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011) and possibly limit the extent to which the findings might be applied on a wider scale. Whilst this may be true, it could also be argued that the cases being interviewed are particularly experienced individuals who have themselves implemented mindfulness interventions across a large number of individuals. Thus, the sample might be described as exploratory, rather than representative.

According to Yin (2018), trustworthiness in exploratory case studies is achieved through rigorous methodology, including the use of multiple evidence sources and maintaining a clear chain of evidence. Careful planning and transparent documentation ensure the study can be replicated. These strategies enhance the credibility and robustness of the findings, making exploratory case studies valuable for generating in-depth insights and forming the basis for further research.

3.4 What is a case study?

Gerring (2006) argued that the case study approach is an intensive study of one or multiple units, with the aim of understanding a larger class of similar units. In this study, each case is explicitly defined as either an individual international school setting where educators have implemented mindfulness interventions to support Third Culture Kids (TCKs) transitioning from primary to secondary education, or a clearly defined group of educators who have collaboratively implemented mindfulness interventions across multiple international schools.

Thus, the primary units of analysis for this research include both institutional contexts (individual schools) and the collaborative educator group, encompassing educators' perceptions, experiences, and practices within these clearly defined intercultural educational environments. Case studies are often chosen by a researcher due to the nature of what they wish to explore. Yin (2003) explains that those who want to define research topics broadly, focus on contextual or complex multivariate conditions (rather than isolated variables) may decide upon the case study approach.

This approach was chosen as it provides clearly bounded contexts—either an individual school or a clearly defined group of educators—allowing for a detailed examination of the cultural, institutional, and contextual factors influencing mindfulness intervention implementation. By defining the case as either the international school or the educator group rather than individual educators alone, this study effectively captures both collective and individual experiences, thus offering richer insights into how institutional dynamics, collaboration, and intercultural contexts shape the outcomes and perceptions of mindfulness practices.

It is possible that mindfulness may aid TCKs with building and maintaining their relationships across the transition, but this could be described as complex and it may be challenging to identify what aspects of mindfulness (if at all) lead to such an effect. Dul and Hak (2007) discuss that case studies might help a researcher to develop a theory. One of the biggest challenges with regards to case studies can be trustworthiness, as the sample size will be inevitably small, which can make the building of theories challenging (Dooley, 2002).

However, drawing on the ideas of Denzin and Lincoln (2011), I recognise that qualitative research often values depth and contextual richness over broad generalisability. By embracing a reduction in traditional measures of trustworthiness, such as replicability and objectivity, I can focus on capturing the nuanced, subjective experiences of TCKs during their transitions (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). This approach allows for a more authentic and holistic understanding of how mindfulness may influence their experiences, providing valuable insights that might be overlooked in larger, more generalised studies. Therefore, while the case study methodology limits trustworthiness, it offers an opportunity to deeply

explore the complex interplay between mindfulness and the transitional experiences of TCKs (Dooley, 2002; Dul & Hak, 2007).

For example, some could argue that teachers in similar positions might recognise and relate to the findings, perhaps offering some validity by way of associated experience (Bassey, 1999). Bassey (1999) also discusses that the investigation should be designed such that the significant features of the case are sufficiently explored, that plausible interpretations are produced and that a worthwhile argument or story emerges. I would aim to gather a large amount of data that is hopefully rich in detail (Dunbar, 2005).

Yin (2018) describes case studies as being used when a researcher wishes to analyse and describe either people, groups, problems or institutions individually and in detail. It is said that this process can either remain at the descriptive level, and perhaps aid in the production of theories. Additionally, Thomas (2023) describes a case study as a thorough investigation into a specific instance, event, individual, or group, in which the distinction between the phenomenon and its context is blurred, thus enabling a detailed comprehension of the subject within its actual environment. The comprehensive and context-sensitive nature of a case study aligns well with the methods used in this research. By conducting in-depth interviews and observations, I was able to capture the nuanced experiences and perceptions of educators who implemented mindfulness interventions. This approach allowed for a detailed exploration of the specific contexts and complexities involved in the transition of TCKs from primary to secondary school. The blurred boundaries between the phenomenon and its context, as described by Thomas (2023), were particularly evident in this study, providing rich, contextualised insights that quantitative methods might not have uncovered. This methodological choice ensured a holistic understanding of the subject within its real-life context, consistent with the principles of case study research.

Within a case study are the individual cases. Gillham (2000) describes cases as units of human activity presently being carried out in the real world that can only be studied or understood in context. Typically, qualitative methods are employed to explore these cases, aiming to gain a better understanding of the underlying meanings and dynamics. However, not all case studies focus on present activities. Rebolj (2013) outlines three types of case studies that extend beyond the present: retrospective, snapshot and diachronic.

Retrospective case studies involve collecting and analysing data related to past phenomena from a historical perspective. Snapshot studies examine a specific period, such as a current event, a day in someone's life or a specific time frame, which can range from an hour to a month. Diachronic studies, or longitudinal studies, observe changes over time and are conducted over extended periods. In this research, the case study approach can be described as a combination of retrospective and snapshot methodologies. I have conducted in-depth interviews and observations with educators who have previously implemented mindfulness interventions. By examining these past implementations, I aim to understand their experiences and the impact of these interventions on students transitioning from primary to secondary school. This retrospective approach, combined with snapshot elements of specific time frames within their experiences, allows for a comprehensive and contextualised understanding of the subject matter within its real-life context.

Hancock and Algozzine (2006) outline three general types of case studies; exploratory, explanatory and descriptive. Explanatory design is said to seek to establish cause-and-effect relationships, looking to identify how events occur and what variables may influence each other. Descriptive designs could be described as attempting to present a complete description of a case within its context. This case study may be suggested to be exploratory as it seeks to explore the perceptions and experiences of educators who have implemented the MBIs.

One of the challenges faced when understanding case study research is, as Harrison et al. (2017) note, that it has been referred to and used as both a methodology and a method. Methods can be described as the procedures and techniques utilised in a study, whereas methodology refers to the lens through which an individual views and makes decisions about the study. Yin (2018) emphasises that although an overarching interpretative methodology is generally adopted when designing case studies, multiple sources of data and methods can be used. Case studies are, according to Harrison et al. (2017), most often described as qualitative inquiry, which may involve exploratory, explanatory, interpretive or descriptive aims. The more commonly used research methods in case studies include observations, interviews, focus groups and document and artefact analysis. In this case study, interviews will be utilised.

In line with Denzin and Lincoln's (2011) perspective, the researcher's own interpretations are not seen as a limitation but as a valuable component of the research. Denzin and Lincoln (2011) highlight the importance of embracing subjectivity and the interpretive nature of qualitative inquiry, as these aspects allow for a deeper and more nuanced understanding of human experiences. This approach recognises the co-construction of meaning between the researcher and participants, enriching the data analysis. By acknowledging and appropriately managing subjectivity, the research benefits from multiple perspectives, enhancing the depth and authenticity of the findings. Therefore, the interpretive methodology and qualitative methods used in this thesis, particularly through in-depth interviews, may be said to align with Denzin and Lincoln's positive view of qualitative inquiry, providing rich insights into the mindfulness interventions and their impact on students transitioning from primary to secondary school in an intercultural context.

Denzin and Lincoln (2018) emphasise that case studies are primarily qualitative, offering an interpretive framework to deeply understand phenomena within natural settings, while also advocating for methodological pluralism by incorporating various methods to capture social complexity. This case study, exploring mindfulness interventions among third culture kids (TCKs) transitioning from primary to secondary school during the COVID-19 pandemic, exemplifies this approach by utilising qualitative interviews. Thematic analysis involves coding information into groups, viewed by Denzin and Lincoln as a reflexive, interpretive process where researchers construct meaning from data. They appreciate the nuanced understanding of parallel, sequential and nested studies, with this case study adopting a parallel approach, where multiple cases are studied concurrently to capture diverse perspectives at the same time. Emphasising rich, thick descriptions, they argue that case studies provide deep insights and facilitate the exploration of specific phenomena (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018).

Bassey (1999) discusses a number of aims that should be kept in mind when conducting case studies. That is, they should be designed such that the significant features of the case are sufficiently explored, that plausible interpretations are produced and that a worthwhile argument or story emerges. Trustworthiness of the interpretations should be key and the argument or story should be relatable to relevant research. Case studies are described by

Adelman et al (1980, cited in Bassey, 1999) as relatively high in validity yet challenging to organise, whilst other data is often weaker in validity and straightforward to organise. Their strength tends to be the attention that can be given to the complexity of the case, with the insights gained often being possible to apply directly to the area of focus.

3.5 The Case Study Process

Bassey (1999) describes the process of carrying out a case study as occurring in stages. The table below illustrates Bassey's stages on the left, and how these relate to this case study on the right.

Bassey's (1999) Case Study Stages	This Case Study
Stage 1 - Based on the research, identify a potential problem.	Students transitioning from primary to secondary schools in an intercultural context may find it more challenging to build and maintain relationships throughout this time.
Stage 2 – Asking research questions and consideration of ethical guidelines.	What are the experiences of educators who have implemented mindfulness with students transitioning from primary to secondary school in an intercultural context? What are the perspectives of educators who have implemented mindfulness based interventions on the impact of mindfulness with students transitioning from primary to secondary school in an intercultural context? What are the perceptions of educators that have implemented mindfulness with students transitioning from primary to secondary school in an intercultural context in terms of the students' ability to maintain or build new relationships during

	transition?
Stage 3 – Collecting and storing the data.	Semi-structured interviews, transcribing the interview.
Stage 4 – Conducting an analysis of the data.	Thematic analysis of the interview data.
Stage 5 – Interpreting or explaining the analysis.	Producing a discussion and interpretation of the thematic analysis.
Stage 6 – Deciding on the outcome and producing a case report.	Drawing conclusions from the data that was collected and analysed, making suggestions for further research.
Stage 7 – Finishing and publishing the work.	Completion of the thesis.

An important consideration not included in Yin's (2003) outline is the adherence to ethical guidelines. Bassey (1999) advises that interviewees should be shown the interview reports or transcripts promptly after the interview to verify their accuracy and ensure they are comfortable with the content, typically under a pseudonym. When conducting case studies in schools, participants should review the case report before publication to approve its content and request pseudonyms if necessary. In this case study, participants were given copies of the interview transcripts to confirm their comfort with the content or express any concerns. Additionally, they were offered the option to receive a copy of the final thesis if desired. This ensures ethical standards are maintained, perhaps developing trust and transparency throughout the research process.

Hancock and Algozzine (2006) offer particular advice with regards to the summarising and interpreting of the information, a part of the process that occurs in the descriptions from all of the above researchers. They suggest that the researcher be willing to refine their research questions in the earlier stages of the case study as data is gathered. Also, it is advised that only the data that is potentially meaningful to the research focus be interpreted (while trying

not to eliminate potentially useful information), as otherwise the process can become overwhelming. Furthermore, the development of a clear and consistent labelling and storage method for data could aid in the analysis process and save time.

3.6 Alternative Methodological Approaches Considered

Action Research:

One method considered was action research, a process of problem identification, planning, action and evaluation aimed at solving problems and improving practices. In the context of this study, an action research project could have involved implementing mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs) with a cohort of Year 6 students transitioning to Year 7, using a control group for comparison. Surveys and questionnaires could have been administered at multiple points throughout the school year to assess changes in students' socio-emotional well-being and relationship-building skills (Efron & Ravid, 2020).

The benefits of action research include its cyclical nature, which allows for continuous refinement of interventions based on feedback and observed outcomes. This method promotes active collaboration between researchers and participants, fostering a sense of ownership and engagement in the research process (Bradbury, 2015). Additionally, action research can provide immediate and practical solutions to identified problems, enhancing the relevance and applicability of the findings (Efron & Ravid, 2020).

However, action research also has limitations. My goal was to explore the perceptions and experiences of educators who had implemented mindfulness with students in an intercultural context. As a result, it was perhaps more beneficial to select a method that allowed me to obtain data from a range of sources from a number of regions around the world. Additionally, due to the cyclical problem-solving nature of action research, it may not be considered to be optimum for an exploration of perceptions and experiences.

Mixed Methods:

A mixed methods approach, combining both qualitative and quantitative research methods, was also considered. This approach could involve administering surveys and questionnaires to gather quantitative data on students' socio-emotional well-being, alongside conducting

interviews and focus groups to collect qualitative data on their experiences and perceptions (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017).

The mixed methods approach offers several advantages, including the ability to triangulate data from multiple sources, enhancing the validity and reliability of the findings (Bryman, 2016). This approach also allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the research problem, capturing both the breadth and depth of participants' experiences (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017).

However, mixed methods research can be complex and time-consuming, requiring expertise in both qualitative and quantitative methods and methodologies (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017). The integration of different data types can pose challenges in terms of data analysis and interpretation, necessitating careful planning and coordination (Bryman, 2016). Additionally, the need for extensive data collection and analysis can place significant demands on resources and time (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017).

To conclude, while various research methods were considered for this study, each with its own strengths and limitations, the decision to conduct a multi-site case study was based on the desire to gain in-depth insights from experienced practitioners across different cultural contexts. The chosen method aimed to provide a deeper understanding of the implementation and impact of mindfulness interventions on students transitioning from primary to secondary school in an intercultural context. Whilst there are benefits to implementing a controlled intervention myself, I decided instead to obtain information from a range of experienced educators who had already been through this process in a variety of contexts, especially culturally.

3.7 The Sample

With regards to my approach to sampling, this was done opportunistically and purposefully, as well as through a snowball method (Dunbar, 2005). The first and most experienced case mentioned is an individual that I contacted directly due to being aware of his experience and knowledge. The second case was a previous colleague who I was aware had implemented an MBI during my time there. The third case was someone that I met during a continued professional development course, and thus perhaps may be considered to have been

acquired opportunistically. The fourth case was an individual that I was put into contact with through Case 1, and thus may be described as a snowball sample. In particular, I was careful to identify individuals who implemented mindfulness in a setting that involved TCKs. To do this, the definition of TCKs was described to each individual and their confirmation that they had students who were appropriate for such considerations was gained before I officially invited them to take part in the research. One aspect of my sample that might be judged as a strength is the variation of countries in and nationalities with which mindfulness was implemented. During the sampling stage, I was careful to ensure that I was seeking people who specifically had implemented mindfulness in an intercultural setting, with students who were undergoing transitions. However, my focus was also to gain access to individuals who had a breadth of experience so that the data might be richer.

This research consisted of four cases, each focusing on an educator with experience implementing mindfulness with students in an intercultural context. Additionally, it included interviews with individuals, such as teachers or form tutors, who supported the implementation process. The purpose of conducting these additional interviews is to be able to get more specific detail about their perceptions and experiences with regard to their implementation of an MBI. Consequently, each case had a lead participant, supported by two or three additional participants. These individuals were chosen for their extensive experience and diverse contexts in implementing mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs). Their varied backgrounds, ranging from seasoned educators to deputy heads and head teachers in British international schools across Asia, South America and Eurasia, provide a rich and comprehensive understanding of MBIs in intercultural settings. Their expertise and insights make them the ideal candidates to offer valuable perspectives on the implementation and impact of mindfulness programmes.

The first case is led by an educator with decades of experience in implementing mindfulness courses among children, students and adults, including in intercultural school contexts such as in Asia and South America. This is in addition to having experience implementing mindfulness courses across the UK, both in schools and among the wider community. The second case is the Deputy Head of a British international school in Southeast Asia who implemented an MBI with students who were attending a British international school. The

third case is an individual who has implemented mindfulness across a whole school (from primary to secondary) in Eurasia. The school is a British international school that caters mostly to local nationals who are looking to access Western education. It includes students from particularly wealthy backgrounds, as well as, scholarship students who often come from relatively low socio-economic backgrounds. The fourth case is a Head Teacher in South America at a British international school who implemented an MBI with students who were mostly from local regions.

The table below illustrates the current plan with respect to the number of interviews and who each interviewee is:

Case Type	Case 1	Case 2	Case 3	Case 4
Context	Worldwide	British international school, Southeast Asia	British international school, Eurasia	British international school, South America
Purpose	Implemented mindfulness with students across a number of countries, including those transitioning from primary to secondary school. The key interviewee has decades of experience researching and implementing mindfulness.	Implemented mindfulness with students who were specifically moving from a private local school into a British international secondary school.	Had a significant number of local students who may be described to have been coming from a significantly different culture to that of the school. This was particularly relevant to the scholarship students, who would mostly come from rural self-sustained villages around the region.	Implemented mindfulness across the whole of a British international school that consists mostly of local students who were new to British-style education upon enrolment.

Interviewee 1	Educator who implemented MBIs worldwide (Case 1 Lead = C1L)	Deputy Head who implemented the MBI (Case 2 Lead = C2L)	Assistant Head who implemented the MBI (Case 3 Lead = C3L)	Head of school who implemented MBI (Case 4 Lead = C4L)
Interviewee 2	Colleague who assisted in Hong Kong (Case 1 support a = C1Sa)	Form Tutor 1a (Case 2 support a = C2Sa)	Form Tutor 1b (Case 3 support a = C3Sa)	Form Tutor 1c (Case 4 support a = C4Sa)
Interviewee 3	Colleague who assisted in Korea (Case 1 support b = C1Sb)	Form Tutor 2a (Case 2 support b = C2Sb)	Form Tutor 2b (Case 3 support b = C3Sb)	Form Tutor 2c (Case 4 support b = C4Sb)
Interviewee 4	Teacher in Hong Kong (Case 1 support c = C1Sc)	Form Tutor 3 (Case 2 support c = C2Sc)	Form Tutor 3b (Case 3 support c = C3Sc)	Form Tutor 3c (Case 4 support c = C4Sc)

3.8 Data Analysis

The interview questions for this study were placed into a table and a note was made as to which research question each interview question may be related to. Any question that was not relevant to a research question was deleted. The interviews were then recorded and transcribed.

NVivo software was used to support the organisation and analysis of interview data. After transcribing each interview, I uploaded the transcripts into NVivo and conducted initial coding by assigning segments of text to nodes based on recurring ideas or concepts. As the analysis progressed, I refined and reorganised these nodes to reflect emerging themes, using NVivo's features to group related codes and track patterns across different cases. The

software also allowed me to keep notes and reflections linked to particular data segments, aiding in the development of higher-level thematic categories. While the process was largely manual and interpretive, NVivo provided a clear structure for managing the data and ensuring consistency throughout the coding process.

3.9 Interviews

As alluded to, the data collection method chosen was online interviews, the reason being that interviews may allow for an in depth understanding of the context to be obtained. It is advised by Hancock and Algozzine (2006) that an interview protocol be designed ahead of time where appropriate open-ended questions are planned. Semi-structured interviews therefore are best suited for case study research due to the flexibility of the approach.

Participants were initially identified through purposive sampling based on their experience implementing mindfulness interventions within international schools or across multiple international settings. Once identified, they were contacted via email and provided with detailed information sheets and consent forms (see Appendices). All interviews were conducted via secure online platforms (Zoom or Teams), with scheduling arranged at the participants' convenience. Interviews ranged from 30 to 45 minutes in length and were audio-recorded with explicit consent. Each interview was conducted in a semi-structured format, allowing flexibility to explore emerging themes while maintaining alignment with the research questions.

I recorded and transcribed the interviews to allow for detailed consideration of the data. Bassey (1999) advised that interviews be recorded and listened to later so that the researcher could concentrate during the interview and avoid wasting time. Pole and Burgess (2000) provided further recommendations for conducting cross-cultural interviews, suggesting that the interviewer should clearly express openness and interest in all information the interviewee could provide, ensuring there was no risk of the interviewee losing face if their answers did not directly fit the question. I also noted body language to ensure the interviewee's comfort, and I implemented these practices throughout my research interviews. Gillham (2000) described interviews as indispensable in case study research and emphasised the importance of considering time consumption. Whilst I kept this in mind, I did still include the supporting participants for each case despite the increased

time consumption, as I believed it would add further perspectives and experiences within the same case.

When discussing interviews specifically in the context of a case study, Flick (2022) advises that the researcher should identify participants in the case study whose knowledge and opinions could be the most insightful regarding the research questions. A particular strength of the methodology of this thesis is perhaps the level to which the participants were well suited to answer questions about implementing mindfulness with students transitioning from primary to secondary school in an intercultural context. Participants could be interviewed either individually or in groups.

Semi-structured interviews were chosen for this research due to the flexibility of the approach. Interview questions were drafted and piloted on individuals who were not participating in the study, but had relevant background experience and were therefore able to offer feedback. This feedback was taken and used to adapt the questions to make them clearer and more open.

A reliable means for recording interview data is important to consider, according to Flick (2022). Although handwritten notes may suffice, details could be lost and a mechanism to record and perhaps transcribe might be more beneficial. For this study, the interview audio was recorded, and then transcribed. This allowed for a detailed and accurate representation of the participants' responses, ensuring that no critical information was overlooked. The transcriptions were then analysed to identify key themes and insights related to the implementation of mindfulness interventions. This process facilitated a thorough understanding of the educators' experiences and perspectives, contributing to the overall rigour and depth of the study's findings (Flick, 2022).

Bassey (1999) adds that when conducting interviews it may be wise to consider that participants might not be comfortable with - or have thought about - the topic in detail beforehand. They could also be irritated by the time taken by the interview process. Body language should also be noted by the interviewer, so as to maximise how comfortable the interviewee finds the experience. With this in mind, I made sure that each participant was thoroughly briefed on the interview topics beforehand to help them feel prepared. I also scheduled interviews at convenient times to minimise any inconvenience. During the

interviews, I paid close attention to the participants' body language and adjusted my approach as needed to ensure they felt at ease. This careful consideration helped create a comfortable and respectful environment, encouraging participants to openly share their insights and experiences.

3.10 Ethics

3.10.1 Introduction

Ethics is described by Beauchamp and Childress (1994, P. 4., cited in Israel and Hay, 2006) as 'a generic term for various ways of understanding and examining the moral life', and is concerned with perspectives on what is right and proper conduct (Israel and Hay, 2006). Wiles (2013) puts forward that research ethics are concerned with moral behaviour within the research context. Clearly outlining ethical considerations ensures accuracy, authenticity, and respectful engagement with participants, particularly within qualitative and interpretive research contexts. In line with Oliver (2004), this study consistently uses the term 'participant' rather than 'subject,' to emphasise respect, dignity, and the active role of those involved in the research process.

3.10.2 Specific Considerations

There are a number of ways that a researcher can approach considering the ethics of their projects. Hammersley and Traianou (2012) outline six key approaches that researchers could take:

1) To consider what is of the highest value as opposed to only instrumental value.
2) To concern oneself particularly with the interests, feelings or rights of others as opposed to pursuing only self-interest.
3) Aiming to adhere to principles and/or rules rather than pursuing the most expedient path.
4) Pursue 'higher values' such as self-realisation, the common good or scientific enquiry as opposed to other aims such as financial return or social status.
5) Behaving according to duty rather than desire or inclination.

6) Trying to behave thoughtfully instead of impulsively.

Hammersley and Traianou (2012) discuss that research ethics is most concerned with how researchers should, and should not, behave when conducting their research and/or what behaviours should be considered virtues and vices during this process. Throughout the design and implementation of this research on mindfulness interventions among educators, I have maintained a strong commitment to these ethical principles. I ensured that the educators' interests, rights and feelings were prioritised by obtaining informed consent, guaranteeing confidentiality and being transparent about the research goals. I adhered to ethical guidelines by carefully planning interviews so as to respect their time and contributions, seeking to understand their experiences in-depth. I aimed to contribute to the common good and scientific knowledge, acting with duty and thoughtfulness, and always considering the impact of my actions on the participants' wellbeing.

3.10.3 Informed Consent

The first specific and fundamental ethical consideration to be discussed here is informed consent. That is, informing prospective participants of what the research will involve and obtaining their consent with regards to their involvement (Wiles, 2013). Key to carrying out this process ethically may be said to be providing individuals with clear information about what their participation will involve, which requires the provision of as much information as possible so that the individual is making an informed decision (Wiles, 2013). It is also clarified by Wiles (2013) that methods designed to incentivise involvement such as offering compensation in return for participation may question the ethical approach to informed consent, as individuals that otherwise might have rejected the invitation to participate may now consent. Given that the reasons as to why they originally would have rejected the invitation are generally unknown, this may put the individual at risk of harm. On the other hand, some researchers simply judge that it may be kind or fair to provide some appropriate compensation for the time given by the participants (Wiles, 2013). Additionally, Miller and Bell (2002) state that potential coercion should be checked for, such as power dynamics whereby the participants may feel pressured to take part. If there are individuals who resist

participation it is advised by Miller and Bell (2002) that this be documented. For example, I am a Head Teacher and, as such, approaching form tutors or colleagues of the lead participant in a case could be considered a power imbalance. To attempt to balance this dynamic I ensured that my approach was always exceptionally polite and gave reminders throughout that their participation is completely voluntary and they are welcome to withdraw at any point with no questions asked. Online consent could also pose a challenge as it may be difficult to verify the identity of those taking part (Wiles, 2013). As a result, the method of obtaining consent might need to be considered. Consent could be obtained verbally or in written form. Further, researchers may need to check that participants are comfortable continuing (obtain consent again) later in the research process if more of their time might be requested, for example in terms of reading or commenting on the raw data that was collected (Miller and Bell, 2002).

There are some circumstances where informed consent might not be obtained despite ethical considerations. Hammersley and Traianou (2012) displayed how this could occur in a flowchart, shown below:
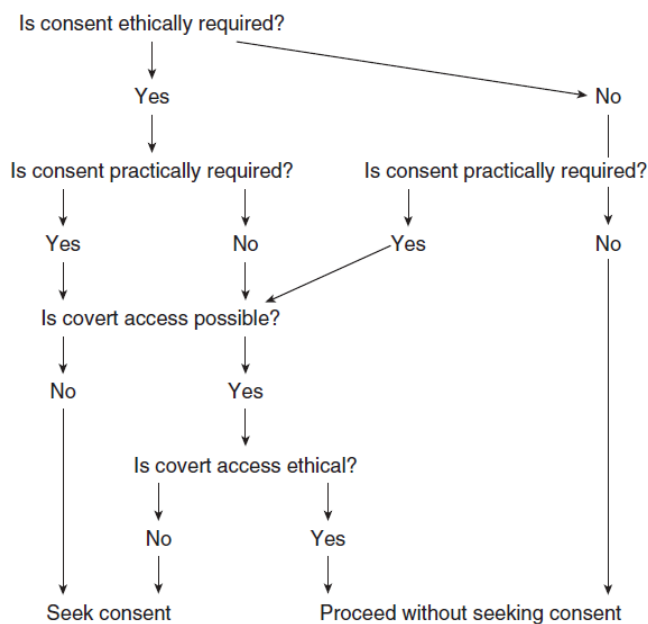
Figure 4.1   Pathways in deciding whether consent should be sought

(Hammersley and Traianou, 2012, p83)

There may be circumstances where consent is not ethically or practically required, such as observing people in public conducting themselves as they otherwise would behave without any intervention. Consent might not be required either if covert access is possible and also ethical, whereby the obtaining of consent would threaten the validity of the data, and conducting the research covertly does not put the sample involved at risk of harm (Hammersley and Traianou, 2012).

This research was not covert however, and thus each participant was provided with an information sheet and a consent form (see appendices). These forms were collected and stored.

3.10.4 Confidentiality

Secondly, another key ethical consideration when planning social research is confidentiality. Brandenburg and McDonough (2019) put forward that researchers should ensure they respect the privacy and confidentiality of participants. Confidentiality is said by Wiles (2013) to mean that any information that could be used to identify the participants should not be disclosed. Additionally, should a participant express that they would not like some of the information they provided during the data collection process to be disclosed, this should be respected. Confidentiality could be described as similar to respecting the privacy and autonomy of participants (Wiles, 2013).

I ensured confidentiality by anonymising all data, assigning pseudonyms to participants, and securely storing interview transcripts and recordings. Additionally, I respected participants' wishes regarding the disclosure of sensitive information, only including data they were comfortable sharing. I communicated clearly with participants about how their information would be used and took measures to prevent any identifying details from being revealed, thereby upholding their privacy and autonomy throughout the research process.

3.10.5 Right to Withdraw

Thirdly, a specific ethical consideration that all researchers may wish to consider is ensuring that their participants have the right to withdraw. Hammersley and Traianou (2012) describe

that autonomy for participants should be ensured, and that it should be assumed that each individual participant is aware of what is best for them. Oliver (2004) may concur with this notion as they state that it could be said to be part of the principles of freedom and autonomy that participants should feel comfortable making the decision to withdraw at any point in the research. They cannot necessarily know in advance how they will find the experience of taking part in the research; therefore, according to Oliver (2004), it is important that it is made clear to participants when informing them in order to obtain their consent to taking part that they are free to withdraw from the research at any time. Notice should not be a requirement for withdrawal and no justification should be requested. In addition, no penalties for withdrawal should be enforced and no pressure to continue should be exerted (Oliver, 2004).

For this research, I ensured participants were fully informed of their right to withdraw at any time without providing notice or justification. During the consent process, I explicitly communicated that there would be no penalties or pressure to continue if they chose to withdraw. This information was reiterated at the start of each interview and included in the written consent form, reinforcing their autonomy and freedom to make decisions about their participation throughout the study.

3.10.6 Prevention of Harm

Finally, preventing any harm from coming to the participants is said by Wiles (2013) to be a generally accepted aspect of conducting social research. Researchers should assess the possible risks to participants and any potential risks should be clearly communicated alongside possible benefits when communicating the details of the research prior to obtaining consent. Lee-Treweek and Linkogle (2000) state that there are four key areas of risk that should be considered: physical, emotional, ethical and professional. They also suggest that professional dangers should be considered, for example the potential consequences of challenging or deviating from existing occupational dynamics. Hammersley and Traianou (2012) do mention, however, that risk of harm, of some kind, is probably unavoidable, and that virtually any activity could carry some level of risk. Also, what constitutes a significant risk may be dependent upon the judgement of the individual, which

could vary. For example, the invasion of privacy has been perceived by some as a form of injury, and the judgement as to whether this has occurred could differ depending on the individual's perspective. Midgley (2014) also considers the calculation of a perceived risk/benefit comparison to be important, but warns against considering only the benefits for the participants. According to Midgley (2014), considering only the voice of the participant may deprive the research from rich and detailed experiences from the perspective of the researcher. It is thus advised that a balance be found where possible.

3.10.7 Integrity

As perhaps became clear when discussing the approaches to ethics, each researcher will have a specific context to their research and thus some considerations will be made by some and not others. The general aim, however, may be to maximise the integrity of the research (Wiles, 2013). For example, fabricating data to report on, or manipulating the conditions of the research process to produce desired results or appropriating the ideas, processes, results and/or words of others without due credit (plagiarism) would all perchance significantly threaten the integrity of the research (Israel and Hay, 2006). Doucet and Mathner (2002) suggest that a way of communicating the integrity of research is to be as transparent as reasonably possible about the decisions that have been made, as well as the theoretical frameworks and approaches that were utilised to make these decisions, as well as, the analytic and interpretive processes that were used. In this study, I ensured that all participants were fully informed prior to signing the consent form, and I kept them updated with any relevant further information. Midgley (2014) suggests that researchers have been put under increasing pressure to produce statistically significant findings or results that are desired by an external funding agency. This pressure could cause some to be biassed when interpreting results, and it is suggested that researchers be aware of this potential issue and to try their utmost to avoid lowering the integrity of their research due to said pressures (Midgley, 2014). My goal was to explore the perceptions and experiences of educators who had implemented mindfulness with students in an intercultural context. This focus was not in contention with any outside pressures, and thus the integrity of the research may be said to be intact.

Forester and Laws (2009) put forward that the cultural differences between researchers and participants may also be worth considering. That is, the cultural background of participants could influence the way in which they respond to requests for data or the process of data collection. The researcher should consider this and design their research in such a way that each participant fully understands what is being asked of them and can contribute appropriately and be interpreted accurately. This would also apply to gender in some circumstances. Thus, Forester and Laws (2009) advise that the research be planned so as to maintain the highest validity possible, despite potential challenges faced in terms of cultural or gender differences. In my research, I was aware that some of the participants spoke English as an additional language, so I made sure that my language was not unnecessarily complicated, and informed them that they can ask the question or comment to be rephrased or translated at any time.

3.10.8 Ethics in Case Studies

Simons (1989) discusses ethics specifically in terms of case studies in education. She suggests that, within the case study context, individuals should have some control over how, in what form and to whom the information about them should be shared. Additionally, the researcher should design their case study so that they are operating within a set of guidelines. In terms of evaluating the potential risks and benefits of the case study, the possible risks to the participants should weigh heavier than the benefits. Simons (1989) states that many of the ethical recommendations for case studies will be familiar to researchers of all types; such as obtaining informed consent, maintaining confidentiality and preventing harm.

However, there are other procedures that will differ according to the context of the case study, its purpose, timescale and the resources available. For example, interviews are frequently carried out so as to collect data for a case study and researchers may advocate the tape-recording and transcription of these. Copies should then be sent to participants to amend or elaborate on. Some guidelines recommend a certain number of days (such as 14 days) to return with comments on the transcripts to ensure that the researcher can maintain

a predictable timeline for their project. Others may prefer to produce their report on the transcripts and share these rather than the raw data. This can be more practical if the timescale of the project is restricted, and also allows participants to comment on their transcripts in the context in which it is to be presented. Although, it is noted by Lowton (2018) that interviews with more than one participant present may mean that when the data is shared individuals may correct what others said during the interview. Ethical considerations particularly related to interviews will be examined next.

In my study, I recorded the interviews and shared this recording with them. Once they were transcribed, I sent copies of this as well to ensure that participants knew that the transcription had been done correctly.

3.10.9 Ethics in Interviews

Oliver (2004) notes that the most common terms for researchers and participants when conducting interviews ('interviewer' and 'interviewee') may be advantageous from an ethical standpoint as they might be said to avoid any attribution of a higher amount of power being given to one or the other individual. Moreover, the type of data collection method becomes evident when using these terms.

Researchers are said by Oliver (2004) to generally have a list of key areas which they hope to discuss with the interviewee. This could be a set of specific questions, or it could be more generally a list of areas or issues that they would like to discuss. Either way, there may come times in an interview where the interviewer would like to pursue a topic that the interviewee appears reluctant to discuss in more detail. This could be a topic that the interviewee is uncomfortable with for any unknown reason. At this time interviewers should assess whether it is ethical to continue pursuing this topic to gain potentially valuable information, or if there is a significant risk of harm to the interviewee to the extent that the interviewer should move on. Perhaps conveniently, though, many people enjoy being interviewed as they are placed at the centre of considerations; their views are seen to be valuable and the research will be using and reporting the information that they provide. This process also allows interviewees an opportunity to contemplate their positions on issues

relating to them in a situation where there are minimal distractions. Therefore, it is arguably an ethical consideration for the research to attempt to maximise the opportunities for interviewees to benefit from the interview experience in terms of providing an opportunity for reflection. This may aid in the production of a situation where both interviewer and interviewee obtain some amount of fulfilment through the process.

When discussing the recording of data during an interview process, Oliver (2004) states that tape recording interviews is the most used strategy. Videotaping is used in some circumstances and may have advantages in terms of being able to record physical gestures and facial expressions, but this could make some interviewees feel uncomfortable. Note-taking is perhaps the least effective method due to the potential loss of important information. One useful strategy could be to place the audio recorder within reach of the interviewee and tell them that they are welcome to click pause or stop at any time. Of course, interviewees should be informed as to the planned recording method, as well as the plan for storing the data, so that their consent is sufficiently informed (Oliver, 2004). Once the interviewer has interpreted the data that they collected, the analysis may be described as their property. At this stage there may arguably not be an obligation to share their analysis with the participants. Therefore, it might be worth considering the rights with regards to data before analysis as being differentiated from the report that is produced from the interpretation of this data (Oliver, 2004).

3.10.10 Overview

In conclusion, this study adopted an interpretivist approach to deeply explore the experiences of educators implementing mindfulness interventions for students transitioning from primary to secondary school in intercultural contexts. The choice of a qualitative methodology, specifically a multi-case study, with each case defined as either an individual international school or a clearly defined educator group implementing mindfulness interventions, was driven by the need to capture rich, detailed narratives that reflect the contexts, perceptions and experiences of educators who have implemented mindfulness with students in an intercultural context. This approach allowed for an in-depth understanding of the complex dynamics involved, which might be overlooked by quantitative methods.

The decision to focus on a relatively small, yet highly experienced, sample was a deliberate one, as it ensured data richness and depth. This exploratory sample provided valuable insights into the implementation and impact of mindfulness interventions, drawing from diverse cultural contexts across Asia, South America and Eurasia. The use of NVivo for thematic analysis ensured a systematic, rigorous examination of the data, highlighting key themes and patterns in the participants' experiences.

Ethical considerations, including confidentiality and the right to withdraw, were rigorously upheld, ensuring the integrity and trustworthiness of the research. This study's findings contribute to a nuanced understanding of how mindfulness interventions can support TCKs during educational transitions, offering practical insights for educators and informing future research in this area. The methodological choices made in this study, grounded in interpretivist principles, ultimately facilitated a comprehensive, authentic exploration of the subject matter within its real-life context.

4.0 Findings

4.1 Introduction

The findings section of this thesis presents a detailed analysis of in various intercultural contexts, with findings organised around four cases—each representing either a single international school or a defined group of educators implementing mindfulness interventions. This section is structured to provide a comprehensive understanding of the experiences of educators, the challenges encountered, and the recommendations for effective mindfulness practices. It is divided into several key areas; addressing TCKs' socio-emotional challenges in school transitions, age sensitivity and cultural challenges in mindfulness implementation, professional development and resource allocation for interventions and the pandemic as a catalyst for mindfulness. Each area provides in-depth insights into the multifaceted nature of mindfulness interventions and their potential benefits for TCKs.

By organising the findings in this manner, the thesis aims to systematically address the research questions and align the discussion with relevant literature. This structure allows for a clear and focused examination of the specific issues faced by TCKs and the role of mindfulness in mitigating these challenges. The division into distinct subsections ensures that each aspect of the research is thoroughly explored, providing a nuanced understanding of the complexities involved. This approach not only highlights the practical implications of the findings but also situates them within the broader context of existing research, thereby enhancing the relevance and applicability of the study's conclusions.

It could be said to be pertinent at this juncture to clarify the focus of the analysis presented within this findings chapter. The exploration undertaken is principally concerned with educators' perceptions of mindfulness interventions in relation to Third Culture Kids (TCKs). While local students were present within the educational contexts under study, their experiences are addressed only in circumstances where educators explicitly noted interactions or comparisons between these groups as influential in understanding mindfulness interventions for TCKs.

The findings that follow are drawn directly from the empirical study, which involved semi-structured interviews with educators working in a range of British international schools. The themes presented are grounded in their professional experiences and reflections on implementing mindfulness with Third Culture Kids during the transition from primary to secondary school.

4.2 Case Overviews

This study examines four cases, each featuring experienced educators implementing mindfulness interventions with students transitioning from primary to secondary school in intercultural contexts. As established earlier, each case presented here represents either an individual international school or a clearly defined group of educators implementing mindfulness interventions across multiple schools. Each overview thus includes contextual details about the school or group, educators' experiences, and specific aspects of mindfulness practice implementation. The first case involves an educator with decades of experience in diverse global settings, providing a broad perspective on mindfulness practices. The second case focuses on a Deputy Head at a British international school in Southeast Asia, highlighting the transition from local to international schooling. The third case, set in a British international school in Eurasia, explores mindfulness implementation among students from varied socio-economic backgrounds. The fourth case features a Head Teacher in South America, offering insights into integrating mindfulness in a predominantly local student body. These cases were chosen for their varied cultural and contextual backgrounds in order to provide rich, comprehensive insights into the impact and implementation of mindfulness interventions.

Case 1:
The leader of this case was an individual who has decades of experience researching and implementing mindfulness techniques with a range of types of individuals. This includes those who are suffering from significant emotional difficulties, such as anxiety or depression, as well as overseeing mindfulness interventions across a significant number of schools in the UK. They had been involved with a number of studies whereby mindfulness was being

implemented with students of all ages. In addition, they had implemented mindfulness internationally, including in South East Asia and South America. The supporting participants in this case were researchers and teachers who had assisted with implementing these mindfulness interventions, both in the UK and internationally.

Case 2:

The leader of this case was a Deputy Head of an international school in South East Asia. Originally, mindfulness had been implemented in the older year groups, such as Year 12 and 13, to possibly improve grades. After implementation with the older year group was established, it was implemented in the younger year groups as well, which was found to be a smoother process. The supporting interviewees in this case were teaching staff who assisted with the implementation of mindfulness with the students. Unintentionally (as the original goal was related to grades) it appears that they found that mindfulness could have positive effects on the mental health of the students. This school mostly consisted of local students, the parents of whom related favourably to mindfulness due to a cultural similarity. There were a number of students from different countries, who were reported to have found it challenging to transition to the school. The interviewees of Case 2 tended to believe that mindfulness may have assisted them whilst they faced the challenges of their transition.

Case 3:

The leader of this case was an Assistant Head Teacher at an international school in Eurasia. One of the supporting interviewees specifically implemented mindfulness during year 6, prior to their transition to secondary school. The supporting participants were also teachers that implemented mindfulness within the school. Benefits to the mental health of students was the most noted potential benefit of the intervention. However, it was stated that there was perhaps a culture clash between the students at the school and mindfulness as a practice. The main challenge in this school was that the boys may not have found the practice masculine enough to be able to maintain motivation. The cohort of the school were mostly local, but there were students from a wide range of other parts of the world. These students were viewed as struggling to build or maintain relationships with their peers. The intercultural factors were said to cause these TCK students additional challenges when

settling into the school. Suggestions were made that mindfulness could assist with this, although implementation with regards to staff time and other variables were mentioned as key considerations.

Case 4:

The lead participant in this case was the Head of School at a British international school in South America. Supporting interviewees were staff members that had found mindfulness useful for their own mental health, and wanted to assist students with emotional issues that had become apparent during the lockdown period. In this case there was a notable reduction in behavioural problems relating to mental health. However, implementation was challenged as there was said to be a clash between the local culture and mindfulness in general, again relating to masculinity in particular. The student cohort of this school was mainly local, though there was a significant number of expat and embassy students. The embassy students were said to struggle with the transition to the school due to the intercultural nature of the context.

4.3 Structure and Interviewee Codes

This section was organised into several key areas to provide a comprehensive analysis of the implementation and impact of mindfulness interventions on Third Culture Kids (TCKs). Below is a table that summarises the structure, such as to make it clear and navigable.

Headings	Perceived Impact on intervention (identified themes)	Perceived impact of intervention (identified themes)
4.4 Addressing TCKs' Socio-Emotional Challenges in School Transitions	4.41 Mental health challenges & TCKs	4.42 Mental health advantages related to mindfulness

		4.4.2.1 Relationship formation
4.5 Age Sensitivity and Cultural Challenges in Mindfulness Implementation	4.5.1 Age of the students	4.5.2 Culture of the students and staff
4.6 Professional Development and Resource Allocation for Interventions	4.6.1 Professional Development and resources	
4.7 The Pandemic as a Catalyst for Mindfulness.	4.7.1 The pandemic	4.7.2 Reduced impact of Lockdowns

This interviewee code table organises the participants involved in the study across different cases and contexts. It provides a clear reference for identifying the roles and contributions of each interviewee, categorised by their case type and context, ranging from a worldwide perspective to specific British international schools in Southeast Asia, Eurasia, and South America.

Case Type	Case 1	Case 2	Case 3	Case 4
Context	A range of international contexts (worldwide)	British international school, Southeast Asia	British international school, Eurasia	British international school, South America
Interviewee 1 Code	Case 1 Lead = **C1L**	Case 2 Lead = **C2L**	Case 3 Lead = **C3L**	Case 4 Lead = **C4L**
Interviewee 2 Code	Case 1 support a = **C1Sa**	Case 2 support a = **C2Sa**	Case 3 support a = **C3Sa**	Case 4 support a = **C4Sa**
Interviewee 3 Code	Case 1 support b = **C1Sb**	Case 2 support b = **C2Sb**	Case 3 support b = **C3Sb**	Case 4 support b = **C4Sb**
Interviewee 4 Code		Case 2 support c = **C2Sc**		Case 4 support c = **C4Sc**

4.4 Addressing TCKs' Socio-Emotional Challenges in School Transitions

At the forefront of themes in the data collected for this research was the evidence of socio-emotional challenges that TCKs appeared to be experiencing when transitioning to new schools in an intercultural context. This included mental health challenges, dealing with loss and struggling to build relationships with their new peers.

This section presents evidence from the empirical study, highlighting educators' observations regarding the socio-emotional challenges experienced by TCKs during school transitions.

4.4.1 Mental health challenges and TCKs

One of the additional challenges that TCK students may face when transitioning from primary to secondary school may be that of loss and grief. They have to leave the place that they call home, the relationships they have built, and the culture that they have become accustomed to (Trethewy, Vanderburg, and van den Akker, 2022). C2L stated:

"It is probably more important for those kids because every year those kids would find it more difficult just in terms of making friends, in terms of in getting the differences in the teaching and learning, language issues, just getting used to the culture, having just changed country some of them or having left their friends behind from another six form so from another high school"

Some TCK students are attending multiple different schools across their academic careers (Ezra, 2003). Each time, they leave behind the friendship groups that they had spent time developing and maintaining. Cockburn (2002) as well as Gilbert (2008) suggested that TCK students struggle more due to their experiences of loss. They referred to both people, but also places, pets and possessions. Additionally, Gilbert (2008) mentioned that the grief of students may go unnoticed or insufficiently attended to. Given the increased experiences of loss and perhaps higher potential for bullying, Dawaele and Oudenhoven's (2009) suggestion that TCKs could illustrate lower emotional stability might be conceivable.

As TCK students might not necessarily be treated differently to their peers, it is possible that these additional challenges might go unnoticed. Not only have TCK students left their homes, they may also find themselves targets due to appearing different to their peers (Lijadi and Schalkwyk, 2014). Mathematics teacher and supporting participant for Case 2, C2Sb, suggested:

"... bullying can really be a problem [for TCKs]".

113

Liu et al. (2022) suggested that mindfulness might be a potential tool for tackling bullying in schools, and some participants also observed this in their schools. This will be touched upon further in the next section.

It was claimed by van Oord (2005) that TCK students tend to adapt quickly, without significant loss of identity or culture. However, the experiences of C3Sb, a Head of Primary at a British international school in Eurasia don't necessarily support this narrative:

"it can be taxing sometimes for the kids who are not western or Kazakh that come in because they do not really have a group that they can actually fit into. So if they are Thai, for example, and they speak Thai and they would now learn in English that can be challenging".

It's possible that some schools may not be aware of the additional challenges faced by these students when transitioning from primary to secondary school in an intercultural context. Increased awareness of these challenges may be crucial for schools to effectively support TCK students, who could be considered more sensitive during their transitions, and thus provide the necessary resources and interventions to aid their adjustment (Bates, 2013).

Building and maintaining relationships, which was a key source of curiosity in this research, was reported consistently by participants as challenging for TCK students in particular. Supporting participant in South America, C4Sb, put forward that:

"No, most students that go into year seven from year six to year seven that are different cultures to the students do not tend to form relationships well. They might form relationships with others. Probably you could get a group of embassy students together but they did not come from massively different cultures at times as well".

The suggestion from this participant is that students may tend to form relationships with those of a similar culture to their own, perhaps because they have a history of experiences and interactions that were of a similar nature (Morales, 2015). As a result, students who are

not from a culture that is similar to their peers could find it difficult to integrate into the school community (Emenike & Plowright, 2017). For this to be the case, international schools may need to find ways to create a more intercultural environment (Jackson, 2005).

As may perhaps be seen, therefore, the general message from our interviewees in this case study might not be considered to support van Oord's (2005) claim. Yet it must be noted that the context of van Oord's school or schools that he was basing his claims on might have been different to the context of these schools. Nonetheless, it could minimally suggest that his claims may not be universal. Other literature such as Limberg and Lambie (2011), Emenike and Plowright (2017), as well as Pyvis and Chapman (2005) would tend to agree with the quotes rather than van Oord (2005), as they suggested that these transitions can have an influence on the identity development and emotional stability of TCK students. Thus, although the quotes might not have supported van Oord (2005), there may certainly be literature that is supported.

Another aspect to the TCK experience that could result in increased challenge is that of relationship development. C2Sa suggested:

"We have a few Korean students who had to learn both Chinese and English. They would make friends but mostly with each other or only a couple of other kids. Only the ones that picked up the language quickly integrated smoothly".

This may support Lijadi and Schalkwyk's (2014) thematic analysis that found TCK students particularly struggle to adjust to new social groups and develop strong relationships due to a need for consistent resilience. The quote specifically refers to learning the language, which might add to the resilience required from students during the transition period. Ezra (2003) also suggested that TCKs experience more frustration and insecurity. This reaction might not be considered unusual for a student who is struggling to build new relationships, whilst also grieving lost ones.

Given that the context of TCK students is specifically cross-cultural, it might not be surprising that culture was mentioned in relation to the additional challenge. C1L stated:

"Those that have come from different countries… and transitioned from one place to another… the challenge that that person is going through and that those are going to be the majority of people going forward I think mindfulness is a necessity in education when you consider that".

Bagnall (2012) might find support from this quote as they referred to TCKs as going through a double transition. They are transitioning to a new school, but they are also transitioning to a new culture. C1L also made a comment with regards to the ratio of students and how this could influence the impact. They stated:

"I think it depends on ratio and at least it depends on the culture of the school. If there was one boy from Syria who enters a class full of all English students then that is more of a challenge. I think that the relationship is the more isolated an individual would be the more challenging they will find it to make relationships".

This concept could relate to why embassy students are mentioned by some participants, given that they tend to have travelled to multiple countries, attended multiple schools and usually do not have many students from their home country in their school. C3Sa also mentioned this issue when they said:

"They might not know the language, they might not walk the same way, run the same way and there are just little things and the other year sevens would pick up on those little things in a judgmental manner".

This perhaps offers further support to Bagnall (2012), as TCK students can be said to behave differently in subtle ways that would get them noticed by their peers possibly in a judgmental way. Learning what these behaviours are may add to the challenge of a double transition. Culture was a key consideration during the interviews and will be considered next.

4.4.2 Mental health advantages related to mindfulness

A consistent theme across all cases was that of improved mental health potentially as a result of mindfulness. This was said to be related to decreases in anxiety, stress and the judgement of themselves and their peers, as demonstrated by Sibinga et al. (2016), who found that a mindfulness-based intervention significantly lowered depressive symptoms, negative affect, undesirable coping strategies, rumination, self-hostility, and posttraumatic stress symptom severity among the participants.

Specifically referring to their students' anxiety, Deputy Head and Case 2's leading participant, C2L stated:

"I think we did see the link to anxiety because there were less students from those groups. I mean we did it over a number of years and we are quite a large school so… after a while we could just tell that there were less students suggesting that they had anxiety issues in the groups that did mindfulness."

Supporting participant C2Sc confirmed C2L's statement when they said:

"So mindfulness just aided in lowering anxiety for those students."

This observation is consistent with Schonert-Reichl et al. (2015), who reported decreases in self-reported symptoms of depression and anxiety in students participating in a mindfulness-based social and emotional learning (SEL) programme. These findings highlight the broader applicability of mindfulness practices in educational settings to enhance students' mental health and well-being. C1L, who has experience in implementing mindfulness programmes across multiple regions of the world, also discussed the potential that mindfulness has in remediating some of the negative effects of emotional distress:

"the same technique (mindfulness) was found to perhaps have an advantage for similar issues but more emotional so anger problems, anxiety problems, depression, suicidal thoughts, self-harm the trajectory is quite varied and I think it is because it stems from the basic construct of (how) to live a good life with debilitating chronic pain. Mindfulness might help people with emotional pain to prevent spiralling into deep negative emotional cycles."

This perspective underscores the potential for mindfulness practices to serve as a foundational tool in the emotional development of students, equipping them with the skills necessary to manage a range of mental health challenges effectively. Support may be offered to De Vibe et al's (2015) work here, who found that those in their sample that displayed higher trait neuroticism (thus experiencing more negative emotion than their lower trait neuroticism peers) illustrated greater benefits from a mindfulness intervention in terms of reduced stress. Stress was mentioned multiple times by participants. For example, C1Sb suggested:

"Yes, I think so because the main thing it would do is, for example, it could reduce negative and stressful feelings"

This supports the general literature. For example, Schonert-Reichl et al (2015) measured the physiological signs of stress and found that their mindfulness intervention improved both cognitive control and stress physiology. Additionally, Weijer-Bergsma et al (2012) found that students and parents who underwent a mindfulness intervention reported positive effects on stress. Stress could be said to be experienced during times of increased challenge and might also be referred to as a type of pain. C1L stated:

"So the effects of mindfulness are that students become less critical. They have a reduction in their stress and they become more comfortable dealing with pain and challenge. The original position of mindfulness was to help individuals deal with pain and that is what mindfulness is. I do not think it is too hard to describe mindfulness as something that could help people deal with emotions like anxiety, sadness, stress. Mindfulness kind of allows people to deal with that pain and that is useful."

The broad benefits of mindfulness extend beyond mere stress reduction, encompassing a holistic improvement in students' ability to handle various forms of pain and emotional challenges. By developing resilience and emotional regulation, mindfulness may equip students with essential coping mechanisms for navigating difficult situations. Gillespie and Harmer (2022) may find support from the above quote as they found evidence for mindfulness improving pain tolerance threshold. Moreover, Mendelssohn et al (2010) found that the undesirable effects of stress such as rumination, intrusive thoughts and emotional arousal could be reduced through mindfulness. This also relates to Gondo's (2013) work, whereby they suggested that mindfulness could assist with dealing with the additional challenges that arise during a transition phase.

A specific point that was raised by C1L was the possible reduction of judgement that can come from practising mindfulness. That is, to become more aware of the thoughts that are occurring in our minds and observing them without judgement could assist with experiences of negative emotion:

"Mindfulness allows students to become more self-aware. They become aware of their emotions because they have to sit in it and be present. They become aware of the thoughts that they otherwise would have let pass by and instead they learn to acknowledge them without needing to judge them. That lack of judgement can help the individual to

119

acknowledge their thoughts without needing to react strongly to them as though they are threats."

Mindfulness practices might encourage students to cultivate a deeper understanding of their inner experiences, promoting emotional intelligence and self-regulation. By developing a non-judgmental awareness of their thoughts and feelings, students could create healthier responses to stress and emotional challenges. From the last quote, support could be found for Thomas (2006), who put forward that those who practise mindfulness might be able to see a situation from multiple viewpoints with a less judgemental mindset, perhaps allowing them to avoid falling into a negative feedback loop of thoughts. Furthermore, Altinyelken et al (2020) found that their mindfulness intervention increased self-awareness and self-care, perhaps allowing individuals to be more kind and compassionate towards themselves and perhaps others too.

4.4.3 Enhancing Relationship Building Through Mindfulness

A number of quotes specifically referred to variables that mindfulness could influence and, in turn, perhaps a student's ability to build and maintain relationships. These were the capacity to be non-judgemental, self-awareness and self-expression. Mindfulness influences students' capacity to be non-judgmental, enhancing acceptance and reducing social anxiety (Peacock, 2014). It also increases self-awareness, aiding emotional regulation and empathy (Emerson et al., 2020). Self-expression is improved as mindfulness encourages openness and confidence, facilitating better communication and relationship-building (Rempel, 2012). These variables collectively support students in building and maintaining relationships, crucial for navigating the social complexities of transitions, especially in intercultural contexts (Wilde et al., 2019). Enhanced emotional intelligence and resilience, developed through mindfulness, further aid in creating a supportive and inclusive school environment (Burke, 2010). Teacher and supporting participant from Case 3 in Eurasia, C3Sa, made the following two suggestions:

"mindfulness makes students less judgmental."

"But now when thinking about the idea of who particularly would benefit I think it is those students that need to be surrounded by people that are not judgmental because they are different."

These suggestions could support Burgoon et al (2000), who put forward that mindfulness may allow for individuals to identify the differences that they have with others in a less judgemental way, perhaps allowing them to build relationships more effectively. C1Sb also mentioned the possibility for mindfulness to aid with being non-judgemental when they said:

"That I think needs to be developed there and that specific thing I think is people being less judgmental and having good relationships with people."

This could offer credence to Lustig and Koester (2010), who suggested that mindfulness could reduce how much individuals make assumptions about themselves and others, perhaps improving communication in an intercultural environment. The second aspect of the individual that mindfulness could influence is self-awareness. C1L stated:

"You need to be self-aware… in order to define what the challenges and problems are to then solve them. So given that… mindfulness might be particularly strong with regards to developing relationships and building self-awareness as well as reducing stress there is definitely an argument that it would be useful."

121

This participant's suggestion is in line with Tuleja (2014), who discussed how self-awareness and emotional intelligence could be aided by mindfulness, and that this could facilitate the building of relationships in an intercultural environment. Additionally, Perera-Diltz and Greenidge (2018) put forward that increased social awareness, emotional regulation and social competence could contribute towards building and maintaining relationships in an intercultural context. It's possible that if an individual becomes more self-aware, they could be more socially aware as a result. For example, they might be able to express themselves more readily and clearly. C3Sb put forward that:

"I think the main thing that I would have seen on the pre-transition side would have been that they were a bit more comfortable talking about things they were worried about with moving to secondary."

For TCKs in particular, if they are struggling to build and maintain relationships, it could be useful to find ways to allow them to express their thoughts more, given that they may have fewer individuals to speak to. Additionally, this may further support Perera-Diltz and Greenidge (2018), as they suggested that mindfulness could assist with an increased awareness of inner experience and inner chatter, possibly allowing for clearer articulation of thoughts. C1L also suggested that this could be a benefit of mindfulness when they said:

"So you will find that I think that the community might become a little stronger and that in itself could mean lower negative emotion that could mean having a higher capacity to express oneself to others, more support from others."

It's possible that the awareness and non-judgemental nature of a mindful individual could allow them to express themselves more effectively. Ainsworth et al. (2023) suggested that mindfulness improves emotional regulation and communication skills, contributing to more

effective relationship-building. C1L mentioned all three of these variables together when they stated:

"If someone is to transition from year six to year seven as you have described they will have a significant amount of stress and they will have issues with regard to the development of relationships, mindfulness helps with both those things. Because part of developing your relationship is to become more self-aware so that you behave in an appropriate manner and express yourself appropriately. And to be less judgmental of other people."

This could support Leland's (2015) and Liu et al's (2022) claim that mindfulness may increase self-control. Finally, when considering these three potential effects of mindfulness, Ghorbani et al's (2009) proposal that mindfulness could play a plausible role in resolving intercultural conflicts might find support here.

These observations underline the multifaceted benefits of mindfulness in easing the transition to secondary school by enhancing self-awareness, reducing judgement and improving self-expression. Ultimately, the practice of mindfulness may significantly contribute to smoother interpersonal interactions and conflict resolution in intercultural educational settings.

4.5 Mindfulness in an Intercultural Context

This section explores the challenges and benefits of implementing mindfulness interventions in intercultural settings, focusing on British international schools. It is divided into three parts: the additional challenges faced by Third Culture Kids (TCKs) transitioning to schools in an intercultural context, how mindfulness may assist with this and, finally, the difficulties of integrating mindfulness when cultural clashes occur and the advantages when local cultures align with mindfulness practices. The analysis includes insights from participants and supporting literature to highlight key themes and recommendations.

123

In the following sections, findings from the empirical interviews are explored in relation to the intercultural challenges faced by TCKs and the perceived role of mindfulness in possibly easing their adjustment.

4.5.1 Challenges faced by TCKs in Intercultural Educational Environments

A strong theme across the interviews was that the TCK students would struggle to integrate into the school community, due to struggling to adapt culturally. As earlier described, the context of the schools for cases 2, 3 and 4 were British international schools, whereby the majority of the student body were local students, whilst there was a proportion of students who came from varying different countries. This meant that if a British student arrived at the school, they would be in the minority with regards to culture among their peers. Whilst, in an ideal world, international schools may provide an intercultural environment where a culturally diverse student body can coexist with ease, this may be challenging when the school has a majority culture within the student body. Students of a differing culture will not have had as many interactions and experiences synonymous to that of their peers. A consistent message across the interviews was that the students who did not share the same culture as the majority of the student body would struggle the most. That is, the Third Culture Kids were found to face additional challenges relative to their peers. This was stated clearly by C2Sb when they said:

"I am not sure it mattered whether they were a different culture to the schools much because we would have quite a few western European and embassy students that would enter into our schools and we had the same culture as them but they just could not integrate into the Chinese students' culture very well and would often have clash with the other students."

Here it can be seen that the participant is perceiving the school as having a particular culture. As mentioned earlier, it would be ideal if international schools could provide a truly intercultural environment. Perceiving the school as adopting a specific culture e.g. 'Western',

might exclude students who have not yet had a number of experiences or interactions in such settings, and could reflect the idea previously outlined by Emenike and Plowright (2017), whereby Western culture might be perceived as preferred to the local culture. Saying that, it can be seen that the participant is concerned that TCK students from a predominantly Western background have struggled in their school with integrating with the student body, the majority of which came from the local area in Southeast Asia. This quote is perhaps a good example of the complex intercultural environment that TCK students are trying to navigate.

Supporting staff who had assisted with the implementation of mindfulness interventions with these students, concurred that non-local students would usually find their transition to the school more challenging due to the intercultural nature of the environment. C2Sc stated:

"The Chinese students were usually fine unless they were really shy, but there are a few students that aren't Chinese and they. Yeah if they weren't Chinese they didn't really I'm afraid they did find that quite tough".

This was supported by C2L, who noted the added difficulty for non-local students in making friends, which aligns with Lijadi and Schalkwyk's (2014) findings on the social integration challenges faced by TCKs. C2L said:

"Those students' transition is probably more challenging because they are not Chinese so it is more difficult in terms of making friends".

Similar challenges were found in Case 4 whereby mindfulness was implemented in a British international school in South America. One of the key supporting staff for implementing mindfulness in this school, C4Sa, suggested:

"Generally, if someone was a different culture to the school they would normally and they were like, but they also had the same culture to their friends like a lot of the Brazilian students they would be fine. If they were a different culture to the school because maybe they were from Sub-Saharan Africa and therefore a different culture to the Brazilians they often were bullied. Whereas the Brazilians their peers shared a culture".

These quotes could support Cockburn (2002), who put forward that TCKs often move to multiple countries, meaning they have a different experience to those in their home countries, as well as those in the local community. They often look physically different and have different customs. Children of ambassadors were particularly mentioned. Cockburn (2002) suggested that the social skill requirements for such a transition could be more demanding as they must learn to interact with those from a variety of backgrounds whilst adapting to the intercultural nature of their environments.

The key theme in terms of the intercultural context of these students was that connecting with other students and building relationships is particularly challenging. Assistant Headteacher in Eurasia and lead participant of Case 3, C3L, suggested:

"I think the biggest thing to be aware of is if the kids that come from somewhere totally different to the others will struggle connecting to them".

Additionally, Headteacher in South American and lead participant of Case 4, C4L, similarly suggested that TCK students find it more challenging to build friendships when they stated:

"So they are specifically coming from a Latin-American culture and entering a British culture in the school and that can cause a challenge. If they come from a culture that is wildly

different then they can struggle a little bit more but they will usually at least find themselves a good couple of friends. So I do think that they manage but it certainly is a bigger challenge for them".

This particularly supports the work of Lijadi and Schalkwyk (2014), who interviewed TCKs and found that a consistent requirement to adjust to new social groups was widely reported as a key challenge. They suggested that complying with local norms could be a struggle, especially at the beginning. Resilience was a key recurring word in their interviews and given the reference to increased challenge in the quotes this could be said to be supported.

It became clear with time that the participants in this research viewed TCKs as being at risk of marginalisation, which could be a cause for concern with regards to mental health. Teacher and supporting participant of Case 4, C4Sc said:

"Those students that have a different culture never really establish good relationships by the end I do not really think… They need a lot of intervention it normally takes like two years because a lot of my year sixes they would find it very hard if they come from like Thailand or we have had Zambia, we have had Kazakhstan we have had a number of students from different cultures to the Brazilians or a different culture to the British and in many of the situations the students found it tough".

This participant underscores the difficulty TCK students face in establishing relationships within a school culture different from their own. Hayden and Thompson (2016) highlight that these schools can perpetuate colonial legacies by promoting Western-centric curricula that can marginalise local or foreign cultures. The participant's observation that TCK students from diverse backgrounds struggle to integrate supports this notion, illustrating the complex intercultural environment these students must navigate and the need for significant intervention to aid their adaptation.

127

Furthermore, such a statement may support Kilguss (2008), who conceived that TCKs may find it challenging to establish a sense of belonging in their schools, and that some international schools may not provide a truly intercultural environment, which could lead to students potentially becoming culturally marginalised. It was suggested that this could result in students finding it challenging to depict themselves authentically in social situations. It became apparent with time that some participants believed mindfulness to be particularly useful for the TCK group of students in particular. C1L said:

"I think that those individuals will perhaps receive the most amount of challenges in that academic year. I would argue that those individuals could benefit from going through a mindfulness intervention. A well-funded, well-resourced mindfulness intervention".

This could be said to be in line with research such as Ghorbani et al (2009), who suggested that mindfulness might be particularly useful to those experiencing intercultural challenges. Perera-Diltz and Greenidge (2018) proposed that mindfulness may increase culturally appropriate engagement, possibly aiding with intercultural transitions. Moreover, the above quote suggests that the challenges for TCKs are significant, which could support Limberg and Lambie (2011), who suggested TCKs could find themselves struggling with academic achievement and emotional stability. This could influence their ability to be mindful in the present moment.

4.5.2 Mindfulness as a Tool for Tackling Intercultural Related Challenges in Education

A number of participants suggested that mindfulness may specifically be useful to TCK students, given the additional challenges. Gärtner (2013) suggested that mindfulness could help individuals be less intensely emotionally impacted by frustrations related to their transition from primary to secondary school. It was suggested that it could be a factor with regards to nurturing readiness for change. Furthermore, Gu et al (2020) suggested that

mindfulness could assist international students with their adaptation to a new educational environment. C4Sb's quote therefore might be said to support this literature.

It was specifically put forward that TCK students could be in need of an intervention such as mindfulness more so than others due to the additional challenge. For example, C2Sc said:

"So if you are going to say that let us focus on those kids that have different cultures I am thinking those kids that have different cultures need mindfulness more in my opinion".

This supports Altinyelken et al (2020) who suggested that international students face additional challenges when transitioning to their new educational environment, including language barriers, culture shock, the loss of a stable support network, increased negative emotion and more. This could therefore put them more at risk of academic or pastoral issues. Burgoon et al (2000) discussed the potential of mindfulness when people interact cross-culturally, describing how paying mindful attention during interactions could lead to more enjoyable and successful interactions, possibly avoiding misunderstandings or even, perhaps, conflicts.

Another aspect of mindfulness that related to transitions in an intercultural context was that of modelling. C1Sa suggested:

"If, for example, you are trying to do it to help third culture kids and the behaviour is not per se a problem it actually might be useful because you are technically modelling the acceptance of something slightly different".

Modelling the acceptance of something slightly different, as this participant describes, might be useful for creating a more intercultural environment, whereby each student is valued equally, and their individual or cultural differences accepted and valued. As Hayden and

Thompson (2016) have put forward previously, international schools could do more to create an environment that is truly intercultural, as opposed to a Western international school operating overseas. Interventions such as mindfulness could be worth considering in light of such a goal.

For example, Ghorbani et al (2009) concluded from their research that mindfulness may play out similarly cross-culturally, and this could assist with resolving intercultural conflicts. By modelling the acceptance and implementation of something new and perhaps culturally different itself, the practice might assist in promoting acceptance of differences in others.

Participants in Case 1 were particularly experienced in a wide range of settings. When discussing culture, it was put forward that mindfulness could aid with an individual's adaptation to new cultures. For example, C1L said:

"So those that have come from different countries and travelled and different cultures and transitioning from one place to another when you think about the idea of the challenge that that person is going through and that those are going to be the majority of people going forward I think mindfulness is a necessity in education when you consider that."

This participant describes that students are increasingly finding themselves in intercultural settings. Van Oord (2008) described international schools as a practice ground for diversity and intercultural encounters, and that seems appropriate in this circumstance. Deveney (2005) discussed culture and how, as the world becomes more global, it may be a challenge to encourage positive interactions in an intercultural context. Potentially, we could consider mindfulness as a possible intervention for this.

Bailey (2012) suggested that international mindedness (respecting and valuing different cultures, embracing diverse perspectives) was especially important and was defined as a person's capacity to hold a worldview that encompasses the diversity and multiplicity of ways of engaging with it. C1Sb, who has extensive experience in implementing mindfulness interventions across both the UK and internationally, suggested:

"say you are in a school in the north of England and you are showing to those students an East Asian meditation technique that has been stripped down to something that is just about understandable for them to a level that they can act it out and you are showing them that you respect it you are giving your time to it equivalently to all the other things that they do. And as a result, you could kind of describe it as modelling the acceptance of something of a different culture."

"Because that is a very specific thing that I think would track that, that I think needs to be developed there and that specific thing I think is people being less judgmental and having good relationships with people."

This evidence obtained from Case 1 therefore may support the idea that mindfulness could assist with building and maintaining relationships within an intercultural context. Ghorbani et al (2009) could find particular support from this evidence, as they claimed that mindfulness could play a plausible role in resolving intercultural conflicts.

4.5.3 Local Culture in Relation to Mindfulness

Although considerations of local cultural influences on mindfulness interventions were integral to the analysis, the primary emphasis remained firmly upon the experiences of Third Culture Kids. Discussions involving local students emerged only where educators highlighted that local cultural contexts significantly shaped or interacted with the mindfulness practices intended primarily for TCKs. An aspect of mindfulness as an intervention that may be slightly different to other options is that it is derived from a spiritual practice. Mindfulness in the West might be considered a non-religious approach to meditation. For example, C4Sb said:

"I see it as a form of spirituality but without all the religious ideas and culture it is like an atheist version of spirituality."

This statement supports Peacock (2014) who discussed the suspicions that can arise from both traditional Buddhist mindfulness practices and Western scientific-based approaches. In particular relation to this quote, Western non-religious mindfulness can be said to have removed religion and culture from the practice. Some Western individuals might be sceptical of mindfulness at first due to the idea that it may be a religious practice. Although, if scepticism doesn't arise from the potential religiosity of mindfulness, issues may still arise to it being a completely new practice. Form tutor and supporting participant C4Sb stated:

"It is not part of their culture to do things like that."

In both cases 3 and 4 it became apparent that one of the challenges of implementing mindfulness interventions could be that the culture of those who are being expected to take on the practice might not easily align well with their perception of mindfulness. It was found that in both of these cases, masculinity was an important aspect of the culture of the male students, and that this may not have aligned well with how they perceived mindfulness. C4Sc suggested:

"Brazilians, we are not used to that. We pray and we are religious but we are not well, mindfulness is kind of it is like yoga so the Brazilian boys find it very difficult. It is not seen as masculine."

As mentioned, this arose in two cases. In Case 3, participant C3L, an Assistant Headteacher who implemented mindfulness at a British international school in Eurasia stated:

"My students are not from western backgrounds and we are a western school, we are a western European registered international school if you want to describe it like that and one of the things I would say is that there is a lot masculinity is a big part of the culture and mindfulness or meditation is not really seen as that masculine."

These observations highlight the nuanced interplay between culture and gender perceptions, revealing that practices like mindfulness can be perceived through the lens of cultural norms around masculinity. Addressing these perceptions requires sensitivity to cultural and gender dynamics, ensuring that mindfulness interventions are adapted to respect and align with the cultural values and identities of the students. This perspective aligns with Castellanos et al. (2020), who stated that adapting mindfulness interventions to better suit the culture of those undertaking them may improve the results.

On the other hand, Case 2, based in Southeast Asia, found that their school had an advantage implementing mindfulness in their context because the local community already regularly practised meditation. For example, Deputy Head of the school, and lead participant of Case 2, C2L said:

"I am aware that the parents themselves were quite happy that we were doing it. Every morning there are hundreds of people out meditating Tai Chi things like yoga. The parents liked it and I think that of those fifty percent it would probably be less in other schools that I have worked at in different cultures, probably even like more western cultures it would probably be more difficult in my opinion."

Form tutor and biology teacher, C2Sa, who assisted C2L with their implementation of mindfulness in the school further suggested:

"The Chinese are more likely to take on mindfulness than like, for example, I just worked in a number of international schools and trying to keep up mindfulness but it really does depend on what school, what the culture of the people are. One of the reasons that I found it pretty easy to take on is because I'm from a Chinese background. I grew up in Scotland but my parents are Chinese. They both do tai chi which is not that much different. So if you are talking about whether there is a difference with those students that is the main difference you have got to be aware of the culture of the students coming in if you want to do something like mindfulness."

Another supporting participant of Case 2 in Southeast Asia, C2Sb, stated:

"That is where it becomes clear that it depends on the culture of the students. If the students come from a culture like China or parts of China it depends where in China you are where meditation or things to do with focusing on your breath or breathing is like a standard then mindfulness is just a very good tool in my opinion."

"So I think it really depends on the culture of the school you are in and the culture of the students at your school and that matters a lot."

These insights underscore the significant role that cultural context plays in the successful implementation of mindfulness practices. The experience of Case 2 supports Jackson's (2005) assertion that understanding the host culture is fundamental to developing effective teaching approaches. In this instance, the local community's familiarity with meditation practices facilitated the acceptance and integration of mindfulness, highlighting the importance of cultural alignment in educational interventions. Another consideration that became apparent throughout the interviews was the age at which you introduce the practice. This will be discussed in the next section.

4.6 Age of implementation

This thesis has focused on the perspectives and experiences of educators who have implemented mindfulness intervention with students transitioning to schools in an intercultural context. A key consideration put forward in these interviews was the idea that younger students may be more engaged with mindfulness when it is introduced. Gärtner (2013) reviewed the literature on readiness for change in relation to mindfulness and notes that mindfulness may improve attitudes, flexibility and self-efficacy, which could be described as relevant factors when seeking a successful transition. Thus, implementing mindfulness with younger students could help them to prepare for the transition, as opposed to implementing it during or after the transition.

Although the participants in this research were generally positive about the possibility that mindfulness could assist students transitioning from primary to secondary school, there were some caveats. One of these caveats was that it was more challenging to implement mindfulness with older students. Younger students were seen to be more enthusiastic about the intervention, and more likely to respond to it positively. C4Sa said:

"The age at which mindfulness is implemented might be key to it aiding with the transition from primary to secondary school."

This highlights the importance of early intervention in mindfulness practices to maximise their effectiveness. Starting with younger children can create a solid foundation for emotional resilience and adaptability. Form tutor and teacher C4Sb who supported mindfulness implementation at a British international school in South America stated:

"Start small and start with younger children. So that is my main advice: go to those that are younger."

This theme was particularly noticeable in Case 2, as mindfulness was implemented both with older and younger students so there was a natural comparison made. C2L suggested:

135

"And then it spread to years six and seven just out of expressing what was going on in the school and it is much better down year six, seven, eight but even year five. …So I reckon it is still the case that you would get far more buy-in though with the younger year groups."

Supporting this notion, another educator pointed out the geographical differences in implementing mindfulness, noting that older students generally posed more challenges outside of specific cultural contexts. C2Sb said:

"The year eleven to twelves I always found more challenging particularly, not in China. In China year eleven to twelves, in my opinion, would have been fine but in other countries, it was more difficult to do the older students. So you would do the younger students and they often were those transitioning, for me".

This quote brings in the idea of culture as a variable, which will be discussed further later. However, it can be said that, in general, the implementation of mindfulness interventions could be more challenging as the students become older. Gärtner (2013) supports this notion, suggesting that readiness for change, improved attitudes and increased flexibility through mindfulness are more easily fostered in younger students.

Still within Case 2, but with a slightly different perspective, a teacher who had supported mindfulness implementation at a British international school in Southeast Asia, C2Sc, suggested:

"Not as much in sixth form because you are dealing with adults with more social skills almost but down in primary where students are a little bit brutal and ruthless and they just say what is instantly on their mind and really focus on differences that is just what I think not in a negative way it is just how they can behave then there, those kids I reckon need mindfulness maybe the most."

This suggestion relates to the idea that children might need mindfulness more due to their relatively lower social skills and higher possibility of open judgement. Gilbert (2008) also purported that it can be specifically challenging to form deep and meaningful relationships in an intercultural context. This could be especially challenging at the younger ages because of the potentially more socially brutal nature of children. Facing these sorts of challenges when entering a new school could make it harder for students to establish a sense of belonging, emphasised by Kilguss (2008) as particularly important. Dvořáková et al (2019) suggests that mindfulness might be specifically useful in aiding adjustment to a new educational environment and fulfilling developmental tasks during this period. Additionally, Gu et al (2020) highlights the potential benefits of mindfulness in aiding adjustment to new environments. Cantali (2019) mentions a period of heightened anxiety before the transition to secondary school. The above quotes may be said to be in line with this notion, therefore, as implementation with younger students may be smoother but also allow for students to possibly reduce their anxiety pre-transition.

An evident theme within Case 3 that is not as evident in the literature is the idea that older students are less motivated to take part in the mindfulness practice. The emphasis on implementing mindfulness with younger students in the literature could be said to focus more on the idea that early intervention may aid with the transition more, and that allowing students to get used to mindfulness prior to the transition could be advantageous. C3L, who led mindfulness implementation at a British international school in Eurasia stated the following:

"It is easier for them because they are younger. It is much easier if you were trying to implement mindfulness for the first time. Consider doing those students."

This underscores the idea that younger students are more receptive to new practices and can integrate mindfulness more seamlessly into their routines. C3L continues by saying:

137

"Year six is better anyway because the younger that you do it the younger it is done I find the more accepting they are of the process. I think it becomes a bit strange to year eights to year nines and so on. But in terms of those transitioning, I think it has like a soothing effect."

This might be described as in line with Ezra (2003) who emphasised the significance of focusing on the initial transition stage. In particular, caution was advised with regards to implementing it with Year 7 due to the increased stress of the students. Yet, Lijadi and Schalkwyk (2014) did warn that implementation too young could be challenging as younger children may have difficulty in explaining and processing certain thoughts. This is perhaps in line with Statham (2011), who noted the importance of resilience and social skills in the transition to secondary school. It was suggested that Years 5 and 6 could be the most appropriate age to have conversations with students, perchance indicating that they have a higher capacity to understand more complex situations. Nonetheless, Gärtner (2013) put forward the notion that mindfulness may be particularly useful for nurturing readiness for change. For this to be effective therefore, implementing it earlier rather than later and thus prior to the change could be advantageous.

A participant who had supported the implementation of mindfulness interventions across a wide range of students across a number of regions, also agreed with the general sentiment that younger students might be more receptive to mindfulness interventions. C1Sa said:

"It is probably a good year to do year 6 because the students get more excited about new ideas and new behaviours so it is a good year."

Their observations reinforce the importance of choosing the right age group for implementing mindfulness to maximise engagement and effectiveness. Meanwhile, their colleague, C1Sb, also suggested:

"I've seen teachers implement it with year 6. Year seven you have to be careful with because they are under a lot of stress anyway. But it is an appropriate year to do it because if you do it very young it is difficult for them to understand"

138

"If it is done in years six and five, yes. Yes, but I think year seven might be a bit late. If it is done in year seven you will need, professionals need to be utilised."

"I think they are at the age where you can have a conversation with them. The instructions can be complex and they can understand them and moreover I think there is still that wonder that they have about learning something new."

Morales (2015) supports the notion that the transition period can be challenging for students, particularly those in intercultural contexts. Limberg and Lambie (2011) highlight the necessity of establishing a secure identity and the potential impact on academic achievement and emotional stability. Lastly, Gondo (2013) put forward that mindfulness may assist transitions by increasing awareness and adaptability. The recommendations found to implement mindfulness earlier rather than later could be said to support the literature in terms of the requirement to consider ways in which we might reduce the challenge during the transition. Saying this, there is little research that specifically has explored the engagement of different ages with mindfulness interventions, and this could be an area of interest for some.

There were, however, further caveats from the participants in this research. That is, whilst mindfulness may be useful in aiding students transition to their new schools in an intercultural context, this might not be effective if certain provisions and support systems are in place. This is what shall be addressed next.

4.7 Professional Development and Resource Allocation for Interventions

4.7.1 Professional development and resources:

The implementation of mindfulness was a key factor for multiple participants. There was a clear theme that, if an intervention was to be successful, the quality of the implementation was important. High quality training, the length of time of the intervention, the practice of those implementing the intervention, senior management, possible negative side effects and

the motivation of staff were particularly mentioned. With regards to the training of staff, C1Sa stated:

"… be mindful that you are going to need to actively train staff who will need to learn it and try it themselves and then they need to be good enough to teach the students that idea. You are best then to use trained professionals but then you need a decent budget for that and that can be described as a good idea but just be aware that it is not a simple thing to implement."

This quote could be said to be in line with Emerson et al (2020), who reviewed studies that had evaluated the efficacy of mindfulness programmes. They found mixed results and in some cases vast differences across content. Delivery and training was said to be a key variable when looking at the fidelity and efficacy of mindfulness programmes. The standard of teacher training in this study was only met in 26% of the studies. Additionally, C4L put forward that:

"Probably what I was saying earlier about CPD, I think that getting the correct amount of training for the staff is really important because if you do not have official, proper training then you cannot really measure whether it is being implemented properly."

This quote particularly refers to the type of approach to training; for example, official training, whereas some schools might try to conduct in-house less formal training. Montero-Marin et al (2021) compared instructor-led and self-taught mindfulness across 43 schools. They found that the self-taught group illustrated improvements in self-compassion and wellbeing. However, the instructor-led group improved in both of these, as well as, mindfulness, perceived stress, anxiety, depression and burnout. Moreover, the changes in participants were found to last longer in the instructor-led group. It might be possible therefore that C4L's observations support such findings.

Another aspect to implementation that was mentioned was the time it might take for effects to be noticeable, even when sufficient training has been put in place. C3L said:

"It takes quite a lot of training. You have got to be careful of quality assurance so to check that everyone knows what they are doing and are doing it properly. And they need to be practised doing it and do not assume you are going to see effects easily. You are probably not going to see an effect straight away."

Support for Wilde et al (2019) might be found here as they suggested that a frequent barrier to implementation mentioned by their participants was the time taken to train staff and the time required of staff during the implementation. They suggested that implementation takes time and may be considered a non-linear process, whereby there are stops and starts.

The quality of implementation also appears to be related to the amount of practice that staff have of mindfulness. C4Sa suggested:

"Decrease their timetables to have time to practise it and fund the training properly, get them to practise it for a while first because you kind of need people that have done it with themselves first. And that is quite a lot to consider so be aware of that."

C1Sa also suggested:

"But when I say if done well that means it needs to be funded and it means that the staff need to have practised in the first place. I do not know how easy that is so perhaps then they should use professionals and in using professionals they one hundred percent need a decent budget or minimum a previously trained member of staff who is willing to take the lead."

As well as C1Sb stating:

"It might work best when staff practise it themselves."

This could perhaps support Jacobsen (2022), who discussed that implementing mindfulness into real-world settings can be complicated relative to clinical settings. It was advised that recognition for the time and energy commitment on behalf of the teachers might be necessary. That teachers should be practising mindfulness themselves frequently, and that this might need to be done even in the face of adversity; this could cause challenges when implementing a mindfulness intervention.

The senior leadership team could also be a key consideration, and their support and willingness to allow for training and practice could be fundamental. C2Sb stated:

"You need to make sure the SLT are supportive. I have been in schools where they are not interested and it is a drain. In schools where they are pro-mindfulness and they want to and they will give you a budget, CPD times and training times things like that you are looking at quite a nice possibility of mindfulness being useful."

Wilde et al (2019) interviewed individuals who had implemented mindfulness interventions and found that having an individual to champion the initiative and individuals in leadership that openly supported the intervention was important for its success.

An often overlooked aspect of mindfulness is that there can be potential negative side effects, and staff may or may not be aware of this possibility. C1Sb said:

"You need to recognise that it can produce safeguarding concerns and you need enough resources."

Additionally, C1L stated:

"If that teacher does not have support and resources she is just thinking it is just something you just drag the students through. And the non-judgmental aspect can often be dropped at that point and there are often situations where an individual might start recalling or noticing quite stressful thoughts and stressful ideas. And if they are not trained well enough in that that could be traumatising for the students and stressful for the teachers. So that is one thing that you need to be aware of. The rigour of the implementation therefore might be fundamental."

Baer et al (2021) found that about two-thirds of participants reported some unpleasant experiences and harm. Some expressed that these difficult experiences had led to important learning or were beneficial long-term. The proportion of participants that reported harm from the mindfulness course was an average of 5%. It is clear, however, that staff may need to be aware of the possibility of these issues and specifically trained in how to tackle them.

Finally, the motivation of staff was said to be a significant element as to whether an intervention might be successful. C1Sa said:

" And they will need to be motivated and taught and engaged in resources and videos."

Whilst C1Sb said:

"You need people that are already motivated."

And C4L suggested:

143

"But you need to know your staff and you need to get them on board with the idea first in my opinion."

This could be said to be in line with the work of Baer et al (2021), who suggested that managing the expectations of staff was especially important. Additionally, Jacobsen (2022) discussed that there might be a peak of inflated expectation with regards to ideas that have received a lot of attention, such as with mindfulness. It is possible that some individuals might find that they begin with high motivation, but as the novelty wears off and particularly high expectations are not met, this motivation could decrease. It was also suggested by Jacobsen (2022) that motivation is a vulnerable factor when implementing mindfulness interventions due to the possibility of inflated expectations being present.

4.8 The Pandemic as a Catalyst for Mindfulness.

4.8.1 Challenges Faced by Students During the Pandemic:

It became clear during the interviews that participants had seen their students struggle with remote learning and lockdowns generally during the pandemic. Participants from Case 1 (which consists of particularly experienced individuals with regard to implementing mindfulness across a number of international locations) noted emerging research supporting the benefits of mindfulness for young people affected by the lockdowns. These findings suggest that mindfulness could play a crucial role in helping students recover from the emotional impact of the pandemic. C1L stated:

"there has been some promising research coming through suggesting that it might aid with the emotional effects of the lockdowns on young people."

and C1Sb said:

144

"What we do have though is some positive research coming out since COVID. The lockdowns seem to have really taken its toll on young people and it's possible that mindfulness could help them recover from that".

These two participants mention that there has been some promising research coming out. Research by those such as Zhang and Shen (2023) or Kock et al (2021) found that having higher amounts of dispositional mindfulness could help and that the beneficial facet of mindfulness could be that of decentring. Godara et al (2021), Matiz (2020), González-García et al (2021) and Witaro et al (2022) assessed the effectiveness of mindfulness on those going through the pandemic and broadly found positive results.

A theme that could be identified in my interview data is that mindfulness appears to have been useful to some as preparation for challenge. Particularly, mindfulness could be said to aid those who are going through one or more transitions. The pandemic may be described to have presented a significant challenge to the world. In the context of this research, students who were transitioning from primary to secondary school did so under the specifically challenging circumstances of the pandemic. Students were locked down and needing to adjust to online learning at the same time that they were transitioning to a new secondary school. It became evident that mindfulness had aided some participants personally during the lockdown period.

Some participants who were working at a British international school in South America began their learning of mindfulness during the pandemic, such as C4L said:

"Yeah, well, mindfulness is actually quite a personal thing for me because I started using it during lockdown when the Covid pandemic occurred.".

C4L then followed this by saying:

"also the young ones who have gone through the lockdown they were coming through and they had not even been in school for quite a while. So those ones that were transitioning had previously not gotten much help with being at home instead of in school and then generally because the school was having to establish itself there was a lot of it that did involve those students."

This participant who implemented mindfulness at their international school in South America mentions the transition to online learning for the students during lockdown at the time. Students that were transitioning to the secondary school were doing so from home. As this could be said to be a new experience for all involved, the support for this transition may have been particularly limited. For example, as mentioned by Koris et al (2021) they might have struggled with social isolation and found themselves with less than optimal knowledge of the culture of the school. It could also have been a challenge for the school to identify which students were engaging proactively with the online curriculum and which ones were possibly falling behind. Koralesky (2021) found that students that preferred connecting to peers and face-to-face interactions had their engagement with their studies fall. Additionally, this quote could be said to support the findings of Murphy et al (2020), whose participants reported that lack of communication with instructors was a particular challenge for students.

Another participant from Case 4, C4Sa, also mentioned beginning their experience with mindfulness during the pandemic when they said:

"Implementing it well, I started it in the pandemic because I went into a depression and not being able to see friends, not family, I live internationally so all of my family are in the UK and they were locked down and the techniques I have used in the past like medication etcetera to deal with depression were problematic."

"just before I went face-to-face before that I was doing one of my lessons I saw some of my students feeling a bit, looking as though they were similarly dealing with mental health issues and started doing it online and it worked quite well and it was relatively easy we would sit there see each other sitting there and it was quite chilled that I was doing."

146

It can be seen here that C4Sa saw a change in the students who were living and completing their studies under lockdown conditions, finding that mental health conditions in particular were of a concern. This observation underscores the significant impact that lockdown conditions had on students' mental health, making mindfulness interventions particularly valuable during this period:

"I think it may have increased it helped uphold my mental health during lockdown and I saw changes in mental health of the kids that were bigger than what I have seen in children with depression, children with suicidal thoughts, children with anxiety, issues with panic attacks."

This participant found that mindfulness had assisted them with their mental health struggles during the lockdown, and they wondered whether this practice could aid the students who appeared to be experiencing something similar. When asked whether this seeming reduction in the mental health of the students may be related to the pandemic, it was stated:

"It was just the pandemic. After the pandemic, the mental health of our students was significantly lower. Some of the ones that were previously vulnerable started to have panic attacks at school.".

Additionally, a teacher supporting C4L, C4Sc, also noticed changes, highlighting the broader emotional toll of the pandemic on students. This statement points to a pervasive sense of loss and diminished well-being among children, further emphasising the critical need for interventions like mindfulness to help restore their emotional health.

"The children just seem to have lost their joy after the pandemic."

This may support Lemay (2021) and Grey et al (2021), whose participants reported increased anxiety during the pandemic. Tsegay et al (2021) also suggested a concern that the lockdown period may have lasting effects on the confidence and mental health of students. This evidence suggests that the conditions that the students lived and studied

under during the pandemic might have been especially challenging. Those that were vulnerable to mental health conditions may have found themselves particularly struggling.

Some of those that may have been more vulnerable during lockdowns could be those who did not have strong relationships with those around them. For example, a teacher that had supported the implementation of mindfulness at a British international school in Southeast Asia, C2Sa, stated:

"I had a very intense breakup just before the pandemic and then the pandemic hit and I did not have anyone to turn to so [*during*] lockdown I was locked down really strictly in China so I could not discuss anything with anyone other than just my whole life was locked in my apartment. So yeah, then mindfulness was like the thing that allowed me to be okay with all of that. And so the kind of stress students go through it would be good if we could get that kind of positive feeling that you can get when you are mindfulness is unlocked."

This participant had found themselves isolated during the lockdowns, which took its toll on their mental health. The suggestion they made was that mindfulness could particularly help during more intense environmental conditions, such as lockdowns. They also stated:

"Its biggest part is the capacity to or its biggest strength is its capacity to deal with things like pandemics I do not think it is a normal construct or anything it is like a normal idea it is just intense it is a very strong mechanism for, it is a very good mechanism for dealing with like serious issues like death or pandemics or things like that".

Another supporting participant from the same case in Southeast Asia, C2Sb, also remarked that mindfulness could have been more impactful during the pandemic era:

"Only after the pandemic. After the pandemic mindfulness it was more noticeable. Before that, I was doing it for a number of years before the pandemic and it was just this is an interesting technique that can help reduce stress in some people that were interested. After the pandemic, it was rather visibly fundamental to the mental health of the kids."

These quotes might particularly support Lemay's work (2021), as it was found that participants reported high stress and anxiety in response to lockdowns, as well as having found social isolation particularly challenging. Considering this, it is possible that mindfulness might be a valuable tool for those who are particularly vulnerable to social isolation.

This theme was also evident in Case 3, where the effectiveness of mindfulness interventions became more pronounced following the pandemic. An Assistant Headteacher at a British international school in Eurasia, C3L, observed a marked improvement in students' emotional well-being post-pandemic, noting a shift in the perceived value of mindfulness practices. This highlights the increased relevance and impact of mindfulness in addressing the heightened emotional challenges brought about by the pandemic:

"Particularly after the pandemic particularly because mindfulness just seemed to be like before the pandemic, what I mean is that before the pandemic not really and it definitely did not help with grades it just seemed to be just something that we were doing that was taking a lot of training up and felt a bit nice I would say. Whereas after the pandemic… one of the things we saw was less emotional problems. I think those students that had to do it did get a benefit but before the pandemic not as much to be honest with you."

This participant suggests that mindfulness might not necessarily be useful for some goals, such as improving grades, but that it did appear to have a positive impact on mental health during the pandemic. Besser et al (2022) found that adaptability was a key skill required for dealing with the type of additional stress endured during lockdowns. The participant refers to mindfulness becoming more visibly advantageous for students upon return from lockdowns. This could support Besser (2022) in that the implementation of mindfulness could be described as a type of adaptation. The following quote may also be said to support the notion that students could have found mindfulness particularly useful during the pandemic.

When considering that mindfulness might be useful to those who may be experiencing social isolation, it might be important to consider Third Culture Kids (TCKs). That is, TCKs often arrive at their new school with largely different cultures to their new peers and find it challenging to establish themselves into a new social group. Additionally, they might have a number of losses in their relationships due to the move. A form tutor who assisted with the implementation of mindfulness at a British international school in Eurasia,C3Sa, said:

"But they (TCKs) would find it hard, particularly after COVID, more so than the other students.".

Nyari (2021) referred to students transitioning to new institutions as well as online learning a 'double transition'. This quote could suggest that TCKs could be dealing with additional challenges when compared to their non-TCK peers. This will be particularly explored next.

4.8.2 The Role of Mindfulness in Easing Challenges for Students Transitioning from Primary to Secondary School During the Pandemic

Some participants were particularly focusing on students who were transitioning from primary to secondary during the pandemic when implementing their mindfulness interventions. C4L said:

"Well, those, yeah, those were actually our target group because we are a growing school so as we grew the students were moving into the secondary phase but they were the first of the secondary school so it was quite a big transition for them in terms of leading the way as it were. And also the young ones who have gone through the lockdown they were coming through and they had not even been in school for quite a while. So those ones that were transitioning having had previously not gotten much help with being at home instead of in school and then generally because the school was having to establish itself there was a lot of it did involve those students. And I think that it was quite beneficial with those in particular because I think they had the highest anxiety. So I think it might have an effect more when your anxiety is particularly high".

This quote may reflect that the transition from primary to secondary for this cohort was particularly challenging due to the unusual conditions. The hope was that their mindfulness intervention could assist the students during this especially challenging period. Such statements may be in line with research such as Semple (2009), who found mindfulness to reduce anxiety in their sample. Semple et al's samples were from lower socio-economic backgrounds than this cohort, so it could imply that mindfulness might reduce anxiety more reliably than we could have assumed before. Additionally, research such as Cantali (2019) suggested that it might be common to see anxiety increase in students in the lead up to the transition from primary to secondary school. Not to mention, others such as Kilguss (2008) and Pyvis and Chapman (2005) mentioned that TCK students could experience higher anxiety than non-TCK students, which was the context of the children in this instance.

Transitioning from primary to secondary school can be challenging for many students. Mindfulness practices have been identified as a potential tool to help alleviate these challenges by promoting self-awareness and improving relationship-building skills. This may be illustrated by C1L, who said:

"If someone is to transition from year six to year seven as you have described they will have a significant amount of stress and they will have issues with regard to the development of relationships, mindfulness helps with both those things. Because part of developing your relationships is to become more self-aware so that you behave in an appropriate manner and express yourself appropriately. "

Weijer-Bergsma et al (2012) suggest that one aspect of the transition from primary to secondary school is the requirement to build new relationships with peers. This was more challenging during the pandemic, given the lockdown policies and remote learning. Strategies that could improve a students' ability to have positive social interactions could therefore be fundamental, and the quotes here may be suggesting that mindfulness may be one of these strategies. What is more, Gärtner (2013) emphasised the benefits of mindfulness in managing change and fostering flexibility in attitudes and experiences,

151

perhaps aligning with the quote's assertion that mindfulness could help individuals deal with their transition to secondary school.

Furthermore, the dynamic and often turbulent environment of schools undergoing significant transitions can amplify the challenges faced by students. In such settings, mindfulness may serve as a stabilising force, helping students navigate the complexities of change and cultural diversity. C2L suggested that mindfulness could be particularly useful with these students when they said:

"Particularly if you have got a school where there is a lot of change generally like if there is a big change between the secondary and primary and the sixth form and a lot of different cultures and families that kind of stuff then and if you came out of a pandemic let us not forget that."

Additionally, the importance of implementing mindfulness correctly to harness its full benefits was emphasised by several educators. Further support for the notion that mindfulness could assist students with this transition came from C1Sa, who stated that:

"Because if done properly you will just gain the benefit of mindfulness which is to help individuals deal with change. Because they may be more self-aware, less judgmental, less stressed and better able to form relationships because of those things and then in turn, the relationships will allow for a better transition and a better adaptation to their environment so I think so."

These quotes support Perera-Diltz and Greenidge (2018) who suggested that students may see a reduction in defensiveness when confronted with differing perspectives and values reinforced, as is the case when there is a mix of cultures and students are going through a lot of general change. The participant is suggesting here that students may become less judgemental with regard to their peers. This aligns with Burgoon et al's (2000) findings on

how mindfulness may allow individuals to identify differences with others in a less judgmental way, potentially aiding in relationship building.

C3Sb also highlighted the role of mindfulness in facilitating open communication and easing anxieties among Year 6 students transitioning to secondary school. This insight relates directly to the research questions about the effectiveness of mindfulness interventions in supporting socio-emotional well-being during school transitions. They said:

"… I think the main thing that I would have seen on the pre-transition side would have been that they were a bit more comfortable talking about things they were worried about with moving to secondary. So I think they would be more open to that discussion around the time we were doing mindfulness."

They refer to the increased comfort for students discussing their thoughts, particularly their anxieties. Darragh (2013), although particularly focused on mathematics, found that the students in his sample transitioned from primary to secondary more successfully when they felt a sense of comfort in the classroom and a sense of belonging. This quote states that the Year 6 students were more comfortable talking about their concerns regarding the transition to secondary school; they were perhaps more open. It could be put forward, therefore, that the quote may support Darragh's notion of comfort in the classroom.

4.9 Summary of Findings

This study examined the implementation and impact of mindfulness interventions on students transitioning from primary to secondary school in intercultural contexts. Key findings highlight the importance of cultural and age appropriateness, professional development, resource allocation, and the socio-emotional benefits of mindfulness practices. Cultural awareness emerged as a significant factor; in regions where meditation is culturally ingrained, acceptance was higher, while in areas unfamiliar with such practices, acceptance was lower, particularly among male students (Peacock, 2014). Age appropriateness also played a role, with younger students more open to mindfulness,

153

suggesting that early introduction in primary school supports better emotional regulation and resilience, aiding smoother transitions to secondary school (Burke, 2010; Rempel, 2012).

Effective implementation relied heavily on professional development and resource allocation, as adequate training for educators was necessary for the proper delivery and sustainability of mindfulness programs (Emerson et al., 2020; Montero-Marin et al., 2021). However, insufficient resources often compromised the quality and consistency of these interventions. The socio-emotional benefits of mindfulness were notable, with educators reporting reduced anxiety and stress, better emotional regulation, and fewer behavioral problems among students, aligning with findings from Zhu et al. (2021) and Farris et al. (2021).

The COVID-19 pandemic further highlighted the need for mental health support, making mindfulness valuable for alleviating stress and anxiety during crises (Koris et al., 2021; Murphy et al., 2020). Resource allocation and professional development were frequently cited as significant challenges, with a lack of adequate resources and funding often acting as barriers to effective implementation (Wilde et al., 2019). Comprehensive training programs and sufficient resources are pivotal to address these challenges and ensure the success of mindfulness interventions (Emerson et al., 2020; Montero-Marin et al., 2021).

Therefore, embedding cultural relevance into mindfulness practices may be beneficial. Educators could consider the cultural backgrounds of their students, making mindfulness practices more accessible and effective (Peacock, 2014). Starting these interventions early, particularly in primary school, can lay a strong foundation for resilience and emotional regulation (Burke, 2010; Rempel, 2012). Furthermore, continuous adaptation and feedback mechanisms ensure that these practices remain relevant and effective. Strong leadership support can significantly enhance the sustainability of these programs (Wilde et al., 2019). This study underscores the importance of being culturally aware, age-appropriate, and well-resourced when implementing mindfulness interventions. By addressing these factors, educators can better support Third Culture Kids (TCKs), helping them build resilience,

improve emotional regulation, and navigate the challenges of transitioning between schools and cultures (Cockburn, 2002).

5.0 Discussion

5.1 Introduction

This discussion analyses the findings from each case, including both individual international school contexts and the multi-school educator group. By treating each international school or group of educators as an individual case, the analysis specifically focuses on contextual factors—such as cultural alignment, resources, professional development, collaboration, and school-wide practices—that have shaped educators' perceptions and the implementation of mindfulness interventions. Mindfulness interventions help navigate socio-emotional and academic challenges faced by students transitioning from primary to secondary school in international contexts. This research explored mindfulness's application in intercultural settings, focusing on vulnerable third culture kids (TCKs) during their transition. TCKs, who interact extensively with diverse cultures distinct from their parents, faced intensified experiences during crises like the pandemic, highlighting the need for effective coping strategies (van Oord, 2005; Bagnall, 2012). In intercultural environments, where challenges to relationship formation are prevalent, effective coping mechanisms are crucial.

This research examines the distinctive needs of students in intercultural contexts, the specific challenges faced by TCKs, and the additional difficulties during transitions, especially amid crises like the pandemic (Zhu et al., 2021). However, its efficacy depends on cultural nuances, age appropriateness, professional development, and resource allocation (Gu et al., 2020).

This study integrates qualitative insights from educators across four international school contexts, exploring the challenges and opportunities of mindfulness in educational support for transitioning students. These insights include C2L's feedback that "every year those kids would find it more difficult… just getting used to the culture" and C3Sb's comment that Year 6 students became "more open to that discussion around the time we were doing

mindfulness". These narratives highlight the complexities of implementing mindfulness in diverse international education settings.

A number of participants said the pandemic heightened the visibility of student anxiety, in some cases prompting leadership to endorse mindfulness. In Case 4, staff who had benefited personally during lockdown initiated mindfulness interventions. The crisis underscored the need for mental health support, propelling schools towards mindfulness practices to address socio-emotional fallout. It also illustrated that transitioning challenges can be amplified by the environment, revealing difficulties in engaging students across varied cultural and age demographics (Koris et al., 2021; Koralesky, 2021; Murphy et al., 2020). Professional development and resource dedication are crucial for successful integration of mindfulness into educational curricula, highlighting the need for continuous investment in educator training and programme development (Emerson et al., 2020; Montero-Marin et al., 2021). For instance, participants in Case 1 and Case 4 depicted concern that mindfulness efforts may have been fragmented due to lack of training. C1Sa stated that "staff need to have practised in the first place… they one hundred percent need a decent budget," while C4Sa emphasised the importance of "fund[ing] the training properly" and giving staff "time to practise it for a while first."

The socio-emotional landscape of TCKs suggests they can benefit greatly from mindfulness interventions. This might be said to be evident in Case 2 and Case 3, where educators reported a reduction in pre-transition anxiety, especially when sessions began in Year 6. According to C3L, "Year six is better anyway… it has like a soothing effect". The practice's potential to enhance emotional regulation, reduce stress and anxiety, and improve relationship building is particularly relevant in intercultural contexts. Some cases noted difficulties with engagement, particularly among male students. In Case 3, one participant stated, "boys didn't really take it seriously – it just wasn't seen as masculine."

This discussion integrates empirical insights with existing literature, examining global, social, professional, and socio-emotional factors to enrich the understanding of how mindfulness

interventions can support students in intercultural contexts, particularly TCKs, through challenging educational transitions.

To ensure coherence with the study's aims, the discussion that follows engages with the three core research questions. Sections 5.2 to 5.8 explore thematic findings in relation to educators' experiences of implementing mindfulness (RQ1), their perceptions of its impact on student outcomes (RQ2), and its role in supporting relationship-building during school transitions (RQ3). Where themes overlap, the analysis draws connections across the questions to highlight the interrelated nature of implementation and impact.

5.2 Mindfulness and the Influence of Context

Intercultural environments, where for example, TCKs often struggle to form relationships, depict challenges. The pandemic exacerbated these issues, and mindfulness interventions were seen as a means to mitigate the negative emotional effects of isolation. Some interviewees noted that their experiences during the pandemic led them to implement mindfulness practices, which they found useful for reducing students' negative emotional consequences. This consistent theme indicates that mindfulness could have been beneficial for addressing these challenges, whether implemented during or after the pandemic. These contextual factors are central to Research Question 1, as they illuminate the conditions under which mindfulness interventions were implemented and the lived experiences of educators managing them.

The effectiveness of mindfulness interventions is significantly influenced by the broader context in which they are implemented. Crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic highlight the necessity of adapting mindfulness practices to meet specific situational demands. During the pandemic, the increased stress and isolation faced by students underscored the importance of mindfulness as a tool for emotional support. This suggests that mindfulness can be particularly beneficial in times of crisis, helping individuals manage heightened stressors and maintain mental well-being (Koris et al., 2021; Murphy et al., 2020). Thus, exploring the challenges faced by students in intercultural environments, yet particularly in a

time of crisis, underscores the potential value of mindfulness interventions in supporting their emotional and social well-being during educational transitions.

The COVID-19 pandemic presented unparalleled disruption in education globally, impacting students' academic experiences and emotional well-being. In intercultural contexts, third culture kids (TCKs), transitioning from primary to secondary education, found themselves particularly vulnerable during this time - a time where relationship formation is already a challenge. The abrupt shift to online learning (Nyari, 2021), coupled with the pandemic's isolating effects (Young Minds, 2020), heightened challenges related to stress, anxiety and adaptation to new educational environments (Lemay, 2021). In light of these challenges, mindfulness interventions emerged as a valuable resource for some schools, offering emotional and social support and aiding in the management of pandemic-induced stressors. The adoption of mindfulness may reflect a broader recognition of its benefits for coping with crises, as highlighted by the experiences of educators and students during the pandemic (Koris et al., 2021; Murphy et al., 2020).

5.3 Role of Mindfulness when Responding to Crisis

In the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, the educational landscape shifted, which led some schools to explore approaches to support students' mental health and well-being. Mindfulness emerged as a possible buffer against the psychological impacts of prolonged isolation and the increased challenge of transitioning to online learning environments (Antonova, 2021). Schools turned to mindfulness practices as a means to cultivate resilience, manage stress and navigate the uncertainties of this new normal (Zhu et al, 2021). The pandemic, while presenting numerous challenges, may have accelerated the adoption and integration of mindfulness interventions within educational settings for third culture kids (TCKs) and their peers. For instance, the experience of Case 4's lead (C4L), who began practising mindfulness during lockdown, underscores the practice's personal and educational value in coping with the pandemic's challenges. This personal engagement with mindfulness mirrored a broader trend across educational institutions, where mindfulness was leveraged to aid students in managing pandemic-induced anxieties and the stress of transitioning to secondary education amidst unprecedented global upheaval (Koris et al.,

2021; Murphy et al., 2020). Therefore, mindfulness might not only be worth considering as a tool for individual coping and resilience but could also warrant consideration with regards to its effectiveness in educational settings during times of crisis.

This experience suggests that the utility of mindfulness could extend beyond the pandemic, but could have potential as a valuable resource in various crisis situations. In times of natural disasters, socio-political unrest or other significant disruptions, mindfulness could serve as a stabilising force, helping students and educators alike (as was seen in this research) to maintain emotional balance and resilience. By developing present-moment awareness and emotional regulation, mindfulness practices might equip individuals with the tools needed to navigate the uncertainties and stressors that crises invariably bring. This broader applicability underscores the importance of integrating mindfulness into educational settings, not only as a response to specific crises but as a proactive measure to support mental health and well-being in an uncertain and ever-changing world.

This section contributes to Research Question 2 by examining how educators might have perceived the role of mindfulness in mitigating stress and promoting emotional resilience during critical periods such as the pandemic.

5.4 Challenges in Implementing Mindfulness During Times of Crisis

Implementing mindfulness during the COVID-19 pandemic brought several challenges to light related to the implementation of mindfulness in an intercultural context. The particularly rapid switch to remote learning, introduced via lockdowns and social distancing measures, highlighted the difficulties of delivering mindfulness practices effectively in a virtual environment (Farris et al, 2021). This shift posed significant obstacles to engaging students meaningfully and maintaining the interactive, participatory essence of mindfulness exercises critical for their effectiveness.

The perceptions shared by interviewees, corroborated by findings from Koris et al. (2021), Koralesky (2021), and Murphy et al. (2020), could be said to draw attention to the broader

challenges faced by schools in engaging students with mindfulness practices during the pandemic. These challenges included navigating the digital platform, access to resources and addressing the varied cultural perceptions of mindfulness to ensure its acceptance and effectiveness in an intercultural context.

These challenges underscore the broader difficulties that can arise when implementing mindfulness during any crisis, not just the COVID-19 pandemic. Crises often necessitate rapid shifts in educational delivery methods and environments, which can disrupt the continuity and effectiveness of mindfulness practices. Additionally, varying access to digital resources and differing cultural perceptions of mindfulness can further complicate its implementation. Ensuring that mindfulness interventions are adaptable to diverse crises and accessible to all students, regardless of their socio-economic or cultural background, might be a valuable consideration. These considerations highlight the need for flexible, culturally sensitive approaches to mindfulness that can be smoothly integrated into various educational settings, thereby maintaining their efficacy in supporting students' mental health during tumultuous times.

5.5 Socio-Emotional Benefits of Mindfulness for TCKs

Third Culture Kids (TCKs) have been noted in this research as especially interesting due to their requirement to adapt to their new educational environments within an intercultural context. This section could be said to primarily respond to Research Question 2 by analysing educators' reflections on the outcomes of mindfulness for TCK students' emotional well-being and classroom behaviour. It could also offer insight into how these perceived benefits may relate to relationship-building, thus perhaps touching upon Research Question 3.

These transitions, especially when moving between educational systems, may exacerbate feelings of isolation, anxiety and stress, as TCKs are required to adapt to new social norms and educational expectations. Mindfulness interventions might be a possible strategy in addressing these socio-emotional challenges, offering tools for emotional regulation, stress

reduction and improved relationship formation. Next, the significant socio-emotional benefits that mindfulness interventions could provide for TCKs will be discussed.

5.5.1 Mental Health Improvements through Mindfulness

Some of the data gained during the interviews in this research could be said to have mirrored the assertions of Baer et al. (2021), which underscored the therapeutic potential of mindfulness in mitigating negative affective states. Through regular mindfulness exercises, individuals may learn to navigate their internal experiences with greater awareness and perhaps less judgement, which has been linked to reduced symptoms of anxiety and depression. A consistent comment across all of the cases was that mindfulness could assist with the mental health of students who are undergoing a particularly complicated or challenging transition, such as during lockdowns.

Additionally, Montero-Marin et al. (2021), suggested that mindfulness programmes, particularly those led by trained instructors, could significantly lower stress levels and improve overall well-being among students, including TCKs. Information gained from the interviews in this research might support this notion and suggest that mindfulness interventions may provide TCKs with strategies to cope with the psychological challenges of adapting to new cultural environments, enhancing their emotional resilience and contributing to their socio-emotional development.

By integrating mindfulness into the routines of students, schools could see improvements in their students' ability to manage emotional upheavals, perhaps supporting their mental health. The data in this research, and the literature outlined suggests that the inclusion of mindfulness practices as a component of support systems aimed at supporting students could be beneficial.

5.5.2 Mindfulness Assisting with Relationship Formation

Building and maintaining relationships when transitioning to secondary school may be a fundamental aspect that will influence the smoothness of the transition. From this research and having considered the wider literature, it may be feasible to suggest that practising mindfulness could assist with this by potentially increasing emotional regulation and promoting a non-judgemental approach. Mindfulness practices could promote a heightened sense of empathy and improved communication skills, elements possibly important for those more vulnerable, like TCKs in particular, who transition to secondary school in a more complex intercultural context (Dawaele and Oudenhoven, 2009). TCK students were said to struggle in particular across multiple cases in terms of relationship formation, so this could be a beneficial consideration for said students. This may directly address Research Question 3, focusing on educators' perceptions of how mindfulness could have supported the social integration and relationship development of transitioning TCK students.

Peer relationships, as established by the literature, may play a significant role in whether a transition to a new school goes well for a student, perhaps providing support during these times, and may assist with counteracting feelings of isolation and disconnection, which may manifest in intercultural contexts. For example, some have suggested that the successful navigation of new cultural settings is partly predicated on the quality of interpersonal relationships formed (Gondo, 2013).

Research such as that by Davidson and Kaszniak (2015), highlight mindfulness's role in enhancing attention to social cues and perhaps promoting pro-social behaviour, thereby possibly improving interaction outcomes. For students in intercultural contexts the practice of mindfulness can translate into a more flexible and non-judgemental approach to social integration, maybe allowing them to bridge cultural gaps and form enduring relationships (Davidson and Kaszniak, 2015). Moreover, mindfulness practices could improve resilience in TCKs due to the improved emotional regulation and non-judgemental approach, which may ease the socio-emotional challenges of transitions, perchance supporting their ability to adapt to a new educational environment in an intercultural context.

Therefore, based on the data obtained in this research as well as the literature that has been reviewed, mindfulness could serve as a mechanism for international students in intercultural contexts to improve their social skills, which could facilitate smoother transitions and promote a sense of community and belonging in their school.

5.5.3 Mindfulness Reducing Stress and Anxiety

It is possible that mindfulness may assist with reducing anxiety in students, particularly during key educational transitions and perhaps especially so with those transitioning to schools in an intercultural context. These interventions, grounded in the practice of present-moment awareness and acceptance, might offer TCKs a framework for navigating the challenges that come with transitioning to a secondary school in an intercultural context. It was reported across a number of cases that mindfulness interventions might help students manage their stress, reducing the prevalence of anxiety and stress-related symptoms among individuals facing significant life changes.

The effectiveness of mindfulness in reducing stress and anxiety can be attributed to several key mechanisms. Firstly, mindfulness practice enhances emotional regulation, enabling TCKs to better manage and process their emotional responses to stressors (Perera-Diltz and Greenidge, 2018). This heightened regulation could be beneficial for those trying to manage the emotional transition to secondary school in an intercultural context. Additionally, the promotion of a non-judgmental attitude towards one's experiences, and a sense of acceptance could help to reduce stress and anxiety (Burgoon et al, 2000). This approach helps TCKs to perceive stressful situations with a sense of clarity and calmness, reducing the likelihood of overwhelming anxiety (Arasaratnam, 2016).

5.6 Mindfulness as a Catalyst for Emotional and Social Support

For the cases in this research, the implementation of mindfulness interventions emerged as a possible tool for providing emotional and social support to students during the pandemic,

perhaps notably third culture kids (TCKs), navigating the challenges of transitioning from primary to secondary school. As reported by interviewees across the cases, mindfulness practices might have assisted with addressing heightened levels of anxiety, stress and social isolation exacerbated by the global crisis and lockdown measures, which could be said to support research such as that of Zhu et al (2021) and Farris et al (2021).

For instance, the lead interviewee from Case 4 (C4L) articulated the personal significance of mindfulness, initiated during lockdown, as a method for managing the stress and disconnection brought on by the pandemic. This reflection could suggest that mindfulness may be useful in mitigating personal challenges, and also potentially in supporting students managing the dual pressures of academic transition and prolonged social isolation (Gärtner, 2013). The pandemic, as indicated by Koris et al. (2021), may have intensified the need for socio-emotional support mechanisms within educational settings, perchance highlighting the direct impact of social isolation on students' engagement and well-being.

Supporting this perspective, another interviewee from Case 4 (C4Sa) shared their journey of turning to mindfulness during the pandemic as a strategy to combat depression and the sense of isolation resulting from strict lockdowns. This personal testimony could be described as aligning with findings from Lemay (2021) and Grey et al. (2021), who reported an escalation in anxiety and mental health concerns among students during the pandemic. The transition to online learning, coupled with reduced interaction with peers and educators, may have increased the socio-emotional challenges faced by students, particularly those in vulnerable groups like TCKs.

Furthermore, the case studies suggested that mindfulness interventions could offer a way to bring back the joy and mental health among students post-pandemic. Interviewees reflected on the observable improvement in students' mental health and the capacity of mindfulness to provide a sense of calm and resilience amidst the upheaval of the pandemic. This evidence may resonate with Tsegay et al. (2021), who posited concerns about the lasting impacts of lockdowns on students' confidence and mental well-being.

The accounts from the interviewees underscore the transformative potential of mindfulness in providing emotional and social support during an unparalleled global crisis. By perhaps developing resilience, reducing anxiety and promoting social connectivity, mindfulness practices could play a role in addressing the multifaceted challenges faced by students, particularly TCKs, during their transition in the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic (Antanova, 2021).

These findings suggest that the benefits of mindfulness extend far beyond the immediate context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The ability of mindfulness to foster emotional stability, resilience and social connection makes it a valuable tool in any crisis that disrupts normal educational routines and exacerbates stress and anxiety. As educational institutions continue to face a variety of global and local challenges, integrating mindfulness practices could offer a consistent, adaptable approach to supporting students' mental health and well-being. This proactive strategy may not only help mitigate the impacts of crises but also enhance the overall educational experience by equipping students with lifelong skills for managing stress and building emotional resilience. Recognising the broader applicability of mindfulness can thus inform future policies and interventions aimed at producing a supportive and resilient educational environment.

5.7 Cultural and Age Sensitivity in Implementation

When implementing mindfulness interventions among third culture kids (TCKs), especially during their transition from primary to secondary school, it has become perhaps key to consider cultural and age sensitivities. The findings in this research supported the work of individuals such as Koris et al. (2021) and Murphy et al. (2020). These studies underscore the significance of adapting mindfulness practices to meet the diverse needs of students, ensuring that interventions are not only effective in enhancing socio-emotional well-being, but also ensure that there is sensitivity to the cultural identities and age-specific receptiveness within the student body.

These logistical and structural considerations can be said to relate closely to Research Question 1, as they shaped the practical experiences of educators in delivering mindfulness interventions.

5.7.1 Cultural Sensitivity in Mindfulness Implementation

This research underscores the broader principle that cultural context is a critical factor in the implementation of educational or mental health interventions (Peacock, 2014). Cultural beliefs, values and practices shape how individuals perceive and engage with mental health strategies, including mindfulness (Nyari, 2021). Interventions that are culturally congruent are more likely to be accepted and effective, while those that clash with local norms can face resistance and limited success (Wilde et al., 2019; Zhu et al., 2021). Thus, educators and policymakers may do well to adopt a culturally responsive approach, tailoring interventions to fit the cultural contexts of their schools (Emerson et al., 2020). This approach ensures that interventions are not only respectful of but also enhanced by the cultural diversity of the student population, perhaps producing a more inclusive and supportive educational environment (Burke, 2010). Recognising and integrating cultural considerations into the design and implementation of mental health interventions could significantly improve their effectiveness and sustainability, providing crucial support to students navigating complex intercultural transitions (Montero-Marin et al., 2021).

The findings in this research particularly put forward the benefit of considering the culture of students and staff when implementing mindfulness interventions. This need may be especially magnified in this research due to the culturally diverse context of the schools. From this research it may be possible to suggest that the cultural backgrounds of students and staff could influence the effectiveness of mindfulness practices (Peacock, 2014). The integration of cultural considerations into the design and implementation of mental health interventions is crucial for their success (Emerson et al., 2020). Recognising and integrating cultural considerations could significantly improve the effectiveness and sustainability of these programmes, providing crucial support to students navigating complex intercultural transitions (Montero-Marin et al., 2021). Hence, a culturally responsive approach not only

respects but also enhances the educational environment, fostering inclusivity and support (Wilde et al., 2019).

For instance, the experiences from a British international school in Southeast Asia (Case 2) reveal that mindfulness practices, when aligned with local cultural norms, encountered smoother implementation and acceptance among the student body and their families. It was noted that the parents were in favour of the implementation of mindfulness due to their culture being in line with such practices. Yet, this contrasted with challenges noted in schools located in Eurasia and South America (Cases 3 and 4), where cultural dissonances, especially concerning perceptions of masculinity and mental wellness, were said to have posed barriers to student engagement with mindfulness practices.

These insights from various case studies emphasise the role of cultural adaptability in the implementation of mindfulness interventions. It highlights the necessity for educators to consider what the cultural context of their school is, and how their mindfulness intervention might be best designed to take these specific cultural characteristics into account (Peacock, 2014). By integrating these practices thoughtfully, mindfulness interventions could become a potential support mechanism for TCKs, perhaps improving their ability to navigate their transition to secondary school in an intercultural context.

5.7.2 Age Sensitivity in Mindfulness Implementation

Implementing mindfulness with sensitivity to the age of students also arose as a key consideration when looking to successfully implement a mindfulness intervention with TCKs. When specifically looking at the transition from primary to secondary school, the age at which the intervention is implemented could be fundamental to whether it is in fact successful. This period has underscored the necessity of designing mindfulness interventions to suit the developmental stages of students, ensuring that these practices are both engaging, relevant and timed in a way that the effects are potentially beneficial. (Burke, 2010)

The findings in this research supported the insights from Koris et al. (2021) and Murphy et al. (2020), emphasising the varied impacts of mindfulness across different age groups. That is, younger students often exhibit a greater openness and enthusiasm towards mindfulness practices. This receptivity may be attributed to the developmental characteristics of younger children, who could be described as generally more open to new experiences and less inhibited by preconceptions compared to their older counterparts. Thus, introducing mindfulness practices at an earlier age can facilitate a smoother adaptation process, possibly helping to develop a foundational skill set that supports emotional and social development.

However, the implementation of mindfulness practices could face distinct challenges when introduced during later developmental stages. Older students, transitioning to secondary education, might exhibit scepticism towards mindfulness, influenced by social perceptions and the increased complexity of their socio-emotional landscapes. This scepticism could be a barrier to engagement, highlighting the potential advantage for mindfulness programmes to be adapted in ways that may resonate with older students. (Rempel, 2012).

Therefore, aligning mindfulness interventions with the developmental stages of students may be especially important for their effectiveness. Younger students, who could be described as naturally more open and curious, may benefit from playful and interactive mindfulness practices that match their developmental level, laying a foundation for emotional regulation and social skills (Burke, 2010). In contrast, older students may exhibit scepticism due to the complexities of their socio-emotional landscapes. For them, mindfulness interventions need adaptation to resonate with their interests and provide clear benefits to counteract scepticism. Tailoring mindfulness practices to different age groups ensures that interventions are engaging and relevant, thereby enhancing their impact. This approach could support resilience and emotional health, making mindfulness a valuable tool for TCKs transitioning through various educational stages (Rempel, 2012). Recognising developmental contexts can significantly improve the effectiveness and sustainability of mindfulness programmes.

5.7.3 Integrating Cultural and Age Sensitivity into Mindfulness Programmes

Taking cultural differences into account when designing mindfulness interventions could be particularly useful. This perhaps became apparent in this research particularly because of the focus on TCK students, who are transitioning in an especially intercultural context. Mindfulness programmes, when carefully adapted to the cultural backgrounds of students, could help to ease these transitions. As highlighted by Murphy et al (2020), mindfulness interventions during the pandemic needed to be adaptable across varying cultural settings to effectively support students, including TCKs.

The effectiveness of mindfulness interventions also varies with the age of the students. Younger students may exhibit greater openness to mindfulness practices, suggesting the importance of age-appropriate design and implementation of these programmes. It could be beneficial to implement the interventions in the later primary years prior to the transition to secondary school. However, implementation with older students could be made more smooth by considering ways in which that age group might be more engaged with the intervention. (Montero-Marin et al, 2021)

Accounting for cultural and age variables in mindfulness programmes could be advantageous, therefore, when addressing the diverse needs of students, particularly TCKs. Future practices could do well to focus on developing adaptable, inclusive mindfulness interventions that are tailored to the cultural backgrounds and developmental stages of students.

5.8 Training and Resources when Implementing Mindfulness

A consistent theme across all of the cases in this research was that professional development could be fundamental to the quality of the intervention being implemented. This realisation supports a body of research, including the work of Emerson et al. (2020), who underscored the mixed results of mindfulness programmes due to variations in content

delivery and instructor training. Further reinforced by the findings of Montero-Marin et al. (2021), the effectiveness of these interventions may be significantly enhanced by the quality of instruction, pointing to the necessity of well-structured professional development programmes for educators. Moreover, the allocation of resources was an aspect of the intervention that was described as particularly important. As detailed in the experiences shared by educational practitioners within the thesis, adequate resources may assist with the adoption of mindfulness practices but also could ensure their sustainability and impact on student well-being.

This theme might reinforce earlier responses to Research Question 2, highlighting the broader context in which mindfulness was deployed and how educators perceived its impact during what may be described as a particularly stressful transition period.

5.8.1 The Role of Professional Development in Mindfulness Implementation

As mentioned, the successful implementation of mindfulness interventions in educational settings, especially for Third Culture Kids (TCKs), may rely on the foundation of robust professional development for the staff who will be implementing the intervention. This correlation underscores the observations by Emerson et al. (2020), who noted the mixed efficacy of mindfulness programmes due to the variability in instructor training and programme delivery. Their research advocates for a structured approach to professional development, ensuring that educators are not only familiar with the practices of mindfulness but are also adept at integrating these practices within the diverse cultural and emotional landscapes of TCKs.

Further emphasising the necessity of comprehensive training, Montero-Marin et al. (2021) compared the outcomes of mindfulness programmes conducted by instructor-led versus self-taught methodologies across multiple schools. They found that instructor-led interventions not only yielded improvements in well-being and self-compassion but also demonstrated more sustainable effects compared to self-taught groups. These findings

171

highlight the critical role that well-trained educators play in the successful deployment of mindfulness interventions.

The case studies depict support for these findings, and thus perhaps a consensus among educational professionals on the value of professional development when implementing mindfulness interventions. Staff needing time to practise mindfulness themselves was mentioned as particularly important; additionally, it was noted in Case 1 that without professional training, the implementation of interventions can be questionable. Overall, it was consistent across all cases that the senior leadership team needed to be in support of the intervention to the extent that they are willing to invest the time and resources into professional development.

Thus, the necessity for professional development when implementing interventions, particularly those surrounding mental health, might be of high importance. Effective training ensures that educators possess not only the technical skills to deliver mindfulness practices but also the sensitivity to navigate the diverse emotional and cultural needs of students. Well-trained staff may create a safe and supportive environment, perhaps required for the success of any mental health intervention. This professional competency allows for consistent and confident implementation, possibly increasing the likelihood of positive outcomes. Furthermore, comprehensive training could develop a deeper understanding of the underlying principles of mindfulness, enabling educators to adapt practices to various contexts and challenges effectively. Investing in professional development is thus a strategic imperative, ensuring that mental health interventions are delivered with the expertise and care required to truly benefit students. This approach might not only enhance the immediate effectiveness of interventions but could also contribute to their long-term sustainability and integration into the educational framework.

5.8.2 Importance of Resource Allocation

Resource allocation emerges as a cornerstone in the foundation of effective mindfulness programmes within schools, particularly in addressing the nuanced needs of Third Culture

Kids (TCKs) amidst their transitions. The breadth of resources, encompassing material, temporal and financial allocations, directly impacts the depth and reach of mindfulness interventions. This assertion aligns with the insights from our case studies, revealing a tangible link between resource availability and the programme's success in nurturing the mental health and well-being of TCKs. The importance of dedicating sufficient resources becomes evident when considering the findings from Montero-Marin et al. (2021), who underscored the enhanced outcomes of mindfulness interventions facilitated by well-resourced, instructor-led training over self-taught approaches.

Resource allocation in this context refers to the provision of a supportive environment where mindfulness practices are accessible, and educators are given the necessary tools and time to develop their skills and deliver quality interventions. It was clear from a number of the interviewees that having senior management who were supportive and willing to allow for investment into such things as formal training, offering additional time for practice and resources where required, greatly contributed to a programme's effectiveness. This was in line with Wilde et al (2019), who specifically looked at barriers to successful implementation of MBIs. Therefore, it's possible that having senior leaders that are willing to support the implementation of the intervention as a school initiative may lead to better results.

Moreover, the engagement with and investment in quality resources could better allow for programmes to adapt to their own intercultural context, perhaps aiding with some challenges that may appear due to said context. As such, the allocation of resources might not be only a logistical necessity, but could also be a strategic investment in the socio-emotional health of the school (Wilde et al, 2019).

Furthermore, the importance of resource allocation extends beyond logistical planning; it may be said to be a strategic imperative that significantly influences the success of any educational or mental health intervention. Adequate resources ensure that interventions are not only implemented but are done so with high fidelity, allowing for thorough training, consistent practice and the ability to adapt to specific needs and contexts. This support structure enables educators to deliver interventions effectively, ensuring that they have the

time, materials and financial backing needed to address the challenges faced by their students. Resource allocation thus becomes a potentially critical factor in the sustainability and impact of interventions, ensuring an environment where both students and educators can thrive. By investing in the necessary resources, schools can enhance the overall efficacy of their programmes, ultimately supporting the long-term mental health and well-being of all students, including those navigating complex intercultural transitions.

5.8.3 Challenges in Professional Development and Resource Allocation

One particular challenge identified through this research was the constraints of financial resources, which may limit the ability of schools to implement a high-quality mindfulness intervention. This financial limitation is echoed in the broader literature, with Emerson et al. (2020) highlighting the disparity in programme efficacy tied to variations in the quality of instructor training, perhaps often correlating with available funding. The ability to secure sufficient financial resources directly impacts the capacity to provide comprehensive professional development, purchase necessary materials, and allocate time for staff to practise and deliver mindfulness effectively.

These financial constraints underscore the importance of strategic investment in resource allocation as a critical component of successful intervention implementation. It might be important therefore for a school's management team to consider how much they are willing to commit towards an intervention such as mindfulness. Without adequate funding, schools may struggle to maintain the consistency and quality required for effective mindfulness programmes, potentially compromising their impact on students' mental health and well-being. This highlights the need for schools to advocate for, and prioritise, funding for such programmes, ensuring that they are seen as essential components of the educational experience rather than supplementary activities. By doing so, schools can better support their educators and students, creating a robust framework that promotes resilience, emotional regulation and overall mental health, especially for those facing the challenges of intercultural transitions. This strategic allocation of resources is not just a logistical

consideration but a foundational investment in the socio-emotional health and academic success of the school community (Wilde et al., 2019).

Furthermore, our case studies illustrated the challenge of integrating mindfulness practices within the existing curricula, where time may often be a scarce commodity. The difficulty in carving out dedicated time for mindfulness interventions, without compromising other academic and extracurricular priorities, perhaps requires a balance that is difficult to achieve. This time constraint not only affects the initial implementation phase but also limits the potential for mindfulness practices to become deeply embedded within the school culture, thereby potentially reducing the long-term benefits for students (Wilde et al., 2019; Emerson et al., 2020).

Having sufficient time allocated for mindfulness is essential for consistent practice, allowing students to fully engage with and benefit from these techniques. Moreover, educators need time to incorporate mindfulness into their routines and to undergo necessary training. Without adequate time, both the immediate implementation and the sustained impact of mindfulness practices could be compromised, making it a crucial resource for schools to consider. Although it may not be a resource that specifically requires additional finances, it is a resource that the management team might benefit from carefully considering.

5.8.4 Examples of Successful Implementation from Each Case

When focusing on the transitioning of students from primary to secondary in an intercultural context, each case involved in this research had areas of success in their implementation of mindfulness that could be beneficial to understand.

Case 1: An international research collaboration involving educators experienced in implementing mindfulness across diverse cultural settings, including Southeast Asia and South America. This case highlighted the importance of professional development, with educators receiving extensive training and resources. The collaboration's success was attributed to the adaptability of the mindfulness programme, which was tailored to meet the

needs of TCKs. This approach led to positive outcomes, such as improved emotional resilience and better coping mechanisms among students, demonstrating the effectiveness of well-supported mindfulness interventions (Emerson et al., 2020; Montero-Marin et al., 2021).

Case 2: A British international school in Southeast Asia effectively incorporated mindfulness into their curriculum. Key factors contributing to this success included comprehensive training for educators and the allocation of dedicated time for mindfulness practices within the school day. This school benefited from cultural alignment, as mindfulness practices were congruent with local norms and well-received by students and parents. Notable improvements in student mental health and stress reduction were reported, attributing these outcomes to the mindfulness programme's structured approach and the educators' preparedness (Peacock, 2014; Burke, 2010). The support from parents and the community also played a critical role, creating a conducive environment for mindfulness practices to thrive (Gärtner, 2013).

Case 3: A British International School in Eurasia demonstrated the importance of addressing cultural perceptions of mindfulness to achieve successful implementation. The school faced initial resistance due to local views on masculinity and mental wellness, which were at odds with mindfulness practices. By customising the programme to align with cultural norms and investing in professional development, the school eventually saw improved engagement and reduced anxiety among students. This case illustrates how cultural sensitivity and targeted professional development can overcome barriers to mindfulness interventions (Peacock, 2014; Rempel, 2012).

Case 4: A British International School in South America, underscored the importance of cultural sensitivity in the programme's delivery. Despite initial challenges, the school adapted its mindfulness practices to fit the local cultural context, which was crucial for acceptance and engagement. The school's leadership played a significant role in supporting the initiative, ensuring that staff received adequate training and time for implementation. These efforts resulted in enhanced social integration and reduced anxiety among students,

highlighting the critical role of cultural adaptation and administrative support in successful mindfulness interventions (Wilde et al., 2019; Murphy et al., 2020).

These particular aspects of each cases' implementation illustrate the potential impact of high-quality professional development and careful resource allocation when implementing mindfulness interventions. By tailoring practices to meet cultural and developmental needs and ensuring comprehensive support for educators, schools can effectively support the mental health and well-being of their students during educational transitions in an intercultural context (Wilde et al., 2019; Zhu et al., 2021; Farris et al., 2021).

5.9 Concluding Remarks

This discussion highlights the promising role of mindfulness interventions for students as they transition from primary to secondary school in diverse cultural settings. This research underscores the significant benefits of mindfulness in enhancing emotional regulation, resilience and overall well-being, particularly during times of crisis, such as the pandemic.

The pandemic underscored the acute need for mental health support, revealing both the potential of mindfulness and the obstacles in engaging students across varied cultural and age demographics. It became evident that professional development and resource dedication are essential for the effective integration of mindfulness practices in schools. Furthermore, the research emphasises the importance of cultural and age sensitivity in the design and delivery of these interventions, ensuring they are both accepted and effective.

In conclusion, while mindfulness interventions hold great promise for aiding TCKs during educational transitions, their success relies on careful and thoughtful implementation. Schools must consider cultural nuances, developmental stages and allocate sufficient resources. Investing in professional development and tailoring mindfulness programmes to specific contexts can significantly enhance their impact on students' mental health and academic success.

6.0 Conclusions

6.1 Implications for Educational Practice

This research highlighted several implications for educational practice, particularly in supporting Third Culture Kids (TCKs) during their transition from primary to secondary school. Mindfulness interventions, when carefully planned and implemented, could enhance students' mental health. Schools that find their context appropriate could consider incorporating mindfulness programmes into their curricula if they observe heightened stress and anxiety in their students, particularly TCKs. These interventions could aid in emotional regulation, resilience, and overall mental health, providing students with an additional tool to manage the challenges they face during their transition from primary to secondary school.

However, to maximise the effectiveness of mindfulness interventions, it is important to ensure cultural sensitivity and age-appropriate practices. Schools could benefit by adapting their mindfulness programmes to align with the cultural backgrounds of their cohort, considering whether these variables could influence engagement with and the effectiveness of the intervention. Additionally, a focus on acceptance and a non-judgemental approach towards others may assist with building peer relationships among these students. Moreover, professional development for the staff involved could be markedly advantageous, equipping them with the skills and understanding necessary to deliver mindfulness practices effectively. Adequate resource allocation is also distinctly important for supporting the sustainability and impact of these programmes.

Furthermore, the integration of mindfulness could be a notable strategy to support students' mental health. The COVID-19 pandemic had a potentially negative effect on students' mental health and, in some cases, was the catalyst for schools attempting mindfulness interventions. Therefore, if a school has the resources and motivation to pursue a thorough and high-quality mindfulness intervention programme, they might find it beneficial to the mental health and well-being of their students, particularly during times of increased challenge, whether faced by a TCK or due to external global events.

6.2 Limitations

This study, of course, includes inherent limitations that we may do well to acknowledge. Firstly, the sample size of this research could be considered relatively small, which may restrict how much we can generalise the data. The case study approach was selected due to the ability to gain in-depth insights into specific contexts, but may not offer broad applicability across diverse educational settings. Consequently, the experiences and perceptions captured in this study may not fully represent the broader population of educators and students involved in mindfulness interventions.

The reflective nature of this case study may influence the reliability of the data. As participants were asked to recall their experiences and perceptions of a mindfulness intervention they had previously implemented, the data might be subject to memory biases and the passage of time. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2011), such retrospective accounts can be affected by personal biases and contextual shifts, potentially impacting the accuracy and depth of the information provided. These factors should be considered when interpreting the findings of this study. However, it is important to acknowledge that reflective accounts can also offer valuable insights and depth of understanding that might not be captured through other data collection methods.

Finally, the cultural and contextual specificity of the study's settings poses a limitation. Whilst the research contains cases from a range of cultures, these are still very specific in context. The international schools and TCKs studied have characteristics that may not align with other educational environments. This cultural specificity, while providing rich, detailed insights, limits the ability to generalise findings to other contexts without careful consideration of cultural differences and educational practices. This is why there has been an emphasis throughout this discussion on schools maybe considering their own individual contexts.

A limitation of this study is the absence of direct insights from the students themselves. By focusing solely on the educators' experiences of implementing mindfulness interventions, the research overlooks the perspectives and experiences of the students who participated in these programmes. Understanding students' viewpoints could provide a more comprehensive evaluation of the interventions' effectiveness and impact. This omission potentially limits the depth and breadth of the findings, as students' first-hand accounts would offer valuable information on how the interventions were received, their challenges and their benefits from the primary beneficiaries' perspectives.

6.3 Future Research Directions

Future research could consider exploring the long-term impacts of mindfulness interventions on Third Culture Kids (TCKs) transitioning from primary to secondary school. Comparative studies across different cultural contexts and educational systems could provide deeper insights into the adaptability and effectiveness of mindfulness practices. Additionally, quantitative research measuring specific outcomes such as academic performance, emotional resilience and social integration would complement qualitative findings. Investigating the role of teacher training and resource allocation in the success of mindfulness programmes could also offer valuable guidance for implementing these interventions more effectively. Additionally, it might be interesting to explore the potential use of mindfulness to assist with mental health issues that arose specifically from the response to the pandemic.

6.4 Overarching Thoughts

This research highlights the significant potential of mindfulness interventions to support Third Culture Kids (TCKs) transitioning from primary to secondary school, particularly during crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic. By exploring the implementation and outcomes of mindfulness programmes across various international school contexts, this research provides valuable insights into the factors that contribute to the success of such interventions.

A key finding of this research is the critical role of cultural sensitivity and age-appropriate practices in the effective implementation of mindfulness interventions. Aligning mindfulness practices with the cultural backgrounds and developmental stages of students ensures greater receptivity and engagement. This approach is supported by the experiences of schools in Southeast Asia, South America and Eurasia, whereby participants explained that they had experienced challenges related to the culture and age of students (Peacock, 2014; Burke, 2010; Rempel, 2012).

Professional development for educators emerged as another crucial factor. Comprehensive training equips educators with the skills and understanding necessary to deliver mindfulness practices effectively, navigating the diverse emotional and cultural needs of students. The findings of Emerson et al. (2020) and Montero-Marin et al. (2021) reinforce the importance of structured professional development programmes, highlighting the enhanced outcomes of instructor-led mindfulness interventions.

Resource allocation, encompassing material, temporal and financial aspects, appeared to be fundamental to the success of mindfulness programmes. Multiple participants explained that support from school management was key to the effectiveness of their interventions. Adequate resources ensure consistent practice, thorough training, and the ability to adapt interventions to specific needs and contexts. The experiences of the case study schools underscore the necessity of strategic investment in resources to sustain and maximise the impact of mindfulness interventions (Wilde et al., 2019).

The socio-emotional benefits of mindfulness for TCKs have been particularly notable in this research. Regular mindfulness practice has been said to enhance emotional regulation, reduce anxiety and stress and improve relationship-building skills. These benefits are critical for TCKs, who face challenges in adapting to new educational environments and cultural settings. The findings support the therapeutic potential of mindfulness, as emphasised by Baer et al. (2021), in mitigating negative affective states and promoting emotional resilience.

However, implementing mindfulness interventions during the pandemic presented challenges, such as the rapid shift to remote learning and varying access to digital resources. These challenges highlight the need for flexible approaches to mindfulness that can be smoothly integrated into diverse educational settings. Ensuring that mindfulness interventions are adaptable to different crises and accessible to all students, regardless of their socio-economic or cultural background, may be advantageous for their efficacy.

The insights gained from this research suggest that mindfulness interventions have a broader applicability beyond the immediate context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Integrating mindfulness into educational settings as a proactive measure can support students' mental health and well-being in an ever-changing world. Schools that invest in culturally responsive, age-appropriate mindfulness programmes, supported by professional development and adequate resources, may create a more inclusive and supportive educational environment.

In conclusion, mindfulness interventions could be said to hold significant promise for supporting TCKs and other students through critical educational transitions. By addressing cultural and developmental needs, providing comprehensive training for educators and ensuring sufficient resources, schools can enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of mindfulness programmes. This strategic approach can develop resilience, emotional regulation and social connectivity, ultimately contributing to the mental health and academic success of students navigating a transition from primary to secondary school in an intercultural context.

These overarching reflections could be said to articulate the study's contributions while acknowledging the challenges in both research and practice that have been discussed throughout this chapter.

6.5 Research Context and Methodology

This research explored the experiences and perceptions of educationalists who have implemented mindfulness interventions into their educational settings. In particular, the focus

was on the implementation and impact of mindfulness interventions on Third Culture Kids (TCKs) transitioning from primary to secondary school within international school settings during the COVID-19 pandemic. TCKs, defined as children raised in a culture different from their parents', often face socio-emotional challenges, which were exacerbated by the pandemic. This study aimed to understand how mindfulness practices can support these students, focusing on their emotional regulation, resilience and overall well-being.

The research employed a qualitative case study approach, involving educators from international schools in Asia, South America and Europe. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews, allowing for in-depth exploration of participants' perceptions and experiences. The interviews were transcribed and analysed thematically to identify key patterns and insights related to the effectiveness and challenges of mindfulness interventions during the pandemic.

6.6 Addressing Challenges in Implementation

Implementing mindfulness in an intercultural context presents challenges, particularly regarding cultural perceptions of mental wellness. In regions like Eurasia and South America, cultural dissonances posed barriers to student engagement. Addressing these challenges requires understanding local cultural norms and adapting mindfulness practices accordingly to enhance acceptance and effectiveness (Peacock, 2014; Cockburn, 2002). Cultural perceptions also influenced how mindfulness was received, with some cultures viewing it sceptically, particularly regarding masculinity. Educators found it crucial to consider such scepticism when planning interventions to overcome resistance and achieve successful implementation (Peacock, 2014). Additionally, age sensitivity is vital for effective mindfulness interventions. Younger students generally exhibit greater openness, while older students require more tailored approaches that resonate with their developmental stages and interests. Tailoring programmes to different age groups ensures relevance and engagement, enhancing their impact (Burke, 2010; Rempel, 2012). Educators noted younger students' enthusiasm, whereas older students needed more sophisticated practices relatable to their experiences and challenges (Burke, 2010).

183

Financial and temporal constraints often limit schools' ability to implement comprehensive mindfulness programmes. Strategic investment in resource allocation, including funding for professional development, materials, and dedicated time for practices, is necessary (Emerson et al., 2020; Montero-Marin et al., 2021). Participants highlighted the importance of senior leadership support in securing resources and integrating mindfulness into the curriculum. Without adequate resources, schools may struggle to maintain the consistency and quality required for effective programmes, potentially compromising their impact on students' mental health and well-being (Wilde et al., 2019).

6.7 Recommendations for Future Practice

6.7.1 Culturally Adaptive Mindfulness Programmes

Future mindfulness interventions should prioritise cultural adaptation, ensuring that practices are tailored to fit the cultural contexts of the student population. This approach not only enhances acceptance but also maximises the effectiveness of the interventions (Zhu et al. 2021). By integrating culturally relevant practices, mindfulness programmes can become more accessible and effective, fostering a supportive environment that respects and celebrates cultural diversity (Nyari 2021).

6.7.2 Early Introduction of Mindfulness Practices
Introducing mindfulness practices early in the educational journey, particularly in primary school, can build a strong foundation for emotional regulation and resilience. Early exposure to mindfulness can help students develop coping mechanisms that support their transition to secondary school and beyond (Burke 2010; Rempel 2012). Early introduction may allow for the development of foundational skills that support emotional and social well-being, making transitions smoother and less stressful for students (Burke 2010; Rempel 2012).

6.7.3 Comprehensive Training for Educators

184

Investing in robust professional development programmes for educators could be especially important for the successful implementation of mindfulness interventions. Training should equip educators with the skills to deliver mindfulness practices effectively and address the specific needs of TCKs. This could ensure that mindfulness programmes are delivered with the necessary expertise and sensitivity (Emerson et al. 2020; Montero-Marin et al. 2021).

Comprehensive training programmes may enhance the quality of mindfulness interventions, ensuring that educators are well-prepared to support students' socio-emotional needs (Emerson et al. 2020; Montero-Marin et al. 2021).

6.7.4 Continuous Adaptation and Feedback

To ensure mindfulness programmes are effective, incorporating continuous feedback and adaptation is crucial. Regularly collecting input from students and educators helps address new challenges and keeps practices relevant (Perera-Diltz and Greenidge 2018).

A dynamic feedback loop allows for ongoing refinement of mindfulness practices, ensuring they align with the evolving needs of students and their cultural contexts. This iterative process maintains the effectiveness of mindfulness interventions, particularly for TCKs transitioning from primary to secondary school (Ghorbani et al. 2009).

This approach creates a culture of continuous improvement, enabling educators to enhance mindfulness practices based on real-time feedback, benefiting the entire student body.

6.7.5 Considerations for Future Research

While this research provides valuable insights into the implementation and impact of mindfulness interventions for TCKs, several areas warrant further exploration. Future research could continue to explore the long-term impacts of mindfulness practices on TCKs and other student populations, particularly in the context of ongoing global challenges. Longitudinal studies could provide deeper insights into the sustained benefits of mindfulness interventions and their role in supporting students' mental health and well-being over time (Sagadin 1991; Simons 2009).

Additionally, exploring the specific components of mindfulness programmes that are most effective for different age groups and cultural contexts could help refine these interventions further. Understanding which aspects of mindfulness practices resonate most with various student demographics can enhance the tailoring and implementation of these programmes, ensuring that they meet the needs of each student population (Burke 2010; Rempel 2012).

6.7.6 What Could Have Been Done Differently

Reflecting on the research process, there are several aspects that could have been approached differently to potentially yield even richer insights. Expanding the sample size to include a more diverse range of international schools and cultural contexts could have provided a broader understanding of the challenges and opportunities associated with mindfulness interventions. Additionally, it could have been valuable to incorporate students into the sample, to gain additional perspectives from them (Yin 2003; Gomm et al. 2000). Nonetheless, it was very much appreciated that it was possible to speak to as many individuals from such a range of backgrounds as I did.

Furthermore, a longer follow-up period would have allowed for the assessment of the long-term effects of mindfulness interventions. Understanding how these practices influence students' mental health and academic outcomes over an extended period could provide valuable insights into the sustainability and enduring benefits of mindfulness programmes (Simons 2009). If I were to pursue further research, this is a consideration that I would make.

6.7.7 Contributions of This Research

This research makes several arguably significant contributions to the field of international education. By focusing on the experiences and perceptions of educators implementing mindfulness interventions in diverse cultural contexts, this study provides insights into the challenges and opportunities associated with these practices. The findings underscore the importance of cultural and age sensitivity, professional development, and adequate resource

allocation in the successful implementation of mindfulness programmes (Emerson et al. 2020; Montero-Marin et al. 2021).

The research highlights the potential of mindfulness interventions to enhance emotional regulation and resilience, in addition to its capacity to aid in relationship formation in intercultural contexts, particularly with respect to TCKs, who require special focus during significant upheavals, such as the transition from primary to secondary education. By incorporating the perceptions of educators during and post a crisis, this study underscores the flexibility and preparedness of mindfulness interventions, emphasising their value in supporting relationship formation and addressing students' socio-emotional needs. These insights can inform future practices, aiding schools in developing effective mindfulness programmes that foster a more inclusive and supportive educational environment (Gärtner, 2013; Zhu et al., 2021).

By providing a comprehensive understanding of the factors that influence the success of mindfulness interventions, this research may offer valuable guidance for educators and policymakers. The recommendations for culturally adaptive and age-appropriate mindfulness practices, comprehensive training for educators and strategic resource allocation can help international schools create supportive environments that enhance students' mental health and well-being during educational transitions in intercultural contexts (Peacock 2014; Burke 2010).

Appendices

Appendices A - Consent Form:

Consent Form

**Exploring Educators Perceptions of Implementing
Mindfulness Interventions with Students Transitioning
from Primary to Secondary School in an Intercultural Context**

I, *participant name*, agree to participate in the research project 'Using Mindfulness with Students Transitioning from Primary to Secondary School in an Intercultural Context', conducted by Harrison James, who has discussed the project with me and provided the necessary details for me to understand what my participation may entail.

I have received, read, and kept a copy of the information letter provided in plain and clear English. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have received acceptable responses to these questions. I understand the general purposes, risks, and methods of this research.

I consent to taking part in the research project and understand the following:
- The research may not be of direct benefit to me.
- My participation is completely voluntary.
- I have the right to withdraw at any point during the research process.
- The potential risks and possibly inconvenience involved in taking part in this research.
- Steps have been taken to minimise the possibility of risks and inconvenience.
- I am expected to take part in a semi-structured interview that will last approximately 30 minutes.
- Whom I should contact with any complaints with the research or conduct of the research.
- I am able to request a copy of the research findings and final report.
- The security and confidentiality of my information is ensured.
- That the interview will be held digitally, and that this interaction will be recorded for the purpose of transcribing.

- The data obtained from my interview will be used for the final project but that my identity will remain anonymous.

Name: _____ (please print)

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendices B - Information sheet for the study:

Participant Information Sheet

Research Project: Exploring Educators Perceptions of Implementing Mindfulness Interventions with Students Transitioning from Primary to Secondary School in an Intercultural Context

The purpose of this research is to explore the experiences and perceptions of educators who have implemented mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs) with students transitioning from primary to secondary school in an intercultural context. This study examines these interventions with a focus on emotional well-being, social integration, and academic adjustment. By understanding educators' perspectives, the research aims to identify best practices and potential barriers, offering insights for schools considering mindfulness programs to students transitioning from primary to secondary school in an intercultural context.

Participants will be politely asked to attend an online interview for approximately 30-45 minutes.

The reason for contacting you is to ask whether you may be willing to participate in this research, as I am aware that you could be described as having specific experience in the area of implementing mindfulness with students transitioning from primary to secondary school in an intercultural context.

Please be mindful that your participation in this study is absolutely voluntary and you are under no pressure to commit yourself to this research. If you agree to participate, but then change your mind at any later stage, you are completely free to withdraw yourself from the research at any time. In addition, if you were to decide to withdraw, all of the information you had provided up until that point would be destroyed. If you agree to participate in the study, you will be asked to sign a consent form, which will confirm that you understand the information provided on this information sheet.

Your participation in this study will be kept confidential. Additionally, your personal details will remain anonymous in the final written project. For example, any quotes or information that you were to provide in an interview would be presented in an anonymous manner. All of the information that you provide will be kept confidential from third parties, and the raw data will be deleted upon the completion of the thesis. The final results of the thesis will be seen by

my supervisor, a second marker and the external examiner. The thesis may be read by future students on the course. The study could potentially be published in a research journal.

I do not envisage any negative consequences for you taking part in this study. No questions in the interview will be of an especially personal nature and will focus only on your experiences and perceptions with regards to the implementation of mindfulness with students. However, it is possible that talking about your experiences could cause some stress (if you were to be recounting a stressful event). If this were to occur, as mentioned, you are free to withdraw yourself from the research at any point. At the end of the interview, I will discuss with you how you found the experience and how you are feeling. It is my hope that the experience may be positive as it will mostly focus on your own expertise and perceptions regarding the implementation of MBIs.

This study has been reviewed by the Ethics Committee of the University of Durham.

If you have any questions, or would like to discuss the research in any way, you are welcome to contact me:

Name: Harrison James

Email: harrison.james@britishschoolbrasilia.org

Mobile number: +55 61 8149 1168

Supervisor name: Catherine Montgomery

Supervisor email: catherine.montgomery@durham.ac.uk

If you agree to take part in the study, please sign the consent form. Thank you for your time in reading this information sheet.

Appendices C - Interview questions:

1	Can you tell me what mindfulness means to you?
2	Tell me about your experiences with implementing mindfulness.
3	What were you looking for when you implemented mindfulness?
4	What experience have you had implementing mindfulness with students transitioning from primary to secondary school?
5	What experience do you have in implementing mindfulness with students who have a different home culture to the school? For example, if you worked in a Western international school, this would apply to students who were not from Western backgrounds.
6	Did you feel there were any differences after the intervention between the groups who experienced mindfulness and those that did not?
7	Was there any difference in the number of pastoral concerns with the intervention group compared to what would typically be expected?
8	Did the intercultural students (those with a different home culture to that of the school or their peers) establish sufficient relationships with their peers by the end of the transition?
9	Would you consider implementing mindfulness with intercultural students transitioning from primary to secondary school again in the future?
10	What advice would you give to someone who is considering implementing mindfulness in their school?

Appendices D - Transcript samples

<u>Sample 1</u>

I: Can you tell me what mindfulness means to you?

P: Well, it was proposed to me so I thought I would give it a go and I think it might be quite good for the kids but I have to say it is not the easiest thing to implement.

I: What do you mean by that?

P: Well, it just takes that extra bit of time and when you have got a full class and then senior leadership duties you do not have that much spare time so you have to look at you kind of want to get your basics done first. So it is just extra on top of that. And then if you are working with Tas and teachers etcetera that can also make it more complicated. It really depends on their attitudes.

<u>Sample 2</u>

I: What experience have you had implementing mindfulness with students well, I suppose you just kind of brought this up a minute ago but transitioning from primary to secondary school? Could you go into a little bit more detail if you do not mind?

P: I suppose I was not as interested at that stage so it was more that it was delegated. I knew how to do it with regards to six formers to just explain the process, so we had a video show them that video, do it with them and everyone would just follow the video and that would be done consistently. But primary I just gave them all the materials and explained how I did it and I think they changed things such that it fits better with primary, especially in terms of the videos. And then the teachers got involved a little bit more than they did at where we were.

I: What sort of differences did you see between the older and younger students in terms of their ability to pick up the skill of mindfulness?

P: Remarkable I would say a good probably at least fifty percent of six formers probably saw it as a chore even it just seemed to I would not say alien because I am aware that the parents themselves were quite happy that we were doing it and meditation like things are not, meditation like things occur every single day where we were. Every morning there are hundreds of people out meditating Tai Chi things like that, yoga. The parents liked it and I think that of those fifty percent it would probably be less in other schools that I have worked at in different cultures probably even like more western cultures it would probably be even more difficult in my opinion. So I reckon it is still the case that you would get far more buy-in though with the younger year groups. You get that with everything like you will get that with

maths lessons if you try and teach a brand new topic of maths to a sixth form fifty percent of them are just like oh, okay, I will learn this. Whereas in primary all of them are excited if you just got your basic teaching.

<u>Sample 3</u>

I: Interesting. Would you consider implementing mindfulness with intercultural students transitioning from primary to secondary school in the future?
P: Well, for the main reason it was continued not just because of the mental health changes it was just because we saw the reduction of bullying and bullying is particularly high. The majority of bullying is towards students that are SEN or those students that are different backgrounds to the students in the school. So that is the reason we are doing it.
I: And what advice would you give to someone who is considering implementing mindfulness in their school?
P: Give teachers time off to practice it like free periods. Decrease their timetables to have time to practice it and fund the CPD properly get them to practice it for a while first because you kind of need people that have done it with themselves first. And that is quite a lot to consider so be aware of that. And another thing would be to consider how much, consider spending money on the CPD rather than getting things that are free because the more professional bodies will give people to talk to and a network when things are difficult. It is a serious thing to implement that is what I am trying to say. So take it seriously.
I: Okay, well, thank you very much for your time.

<u>Sample 4</u>

I: Did the intercultural students so those with a different home culture to that of the school or their peers did they establish sufficient relationships with their peers by the end of the transition?
P: If they had the same culture as the majority of the students, yes. If they had a different culture from the majority of the students, no, they did not.
I: And would you consider implementing mindfulness with intercultural students transitioning from primary to secondary school again in the future?
P: Yes, I am at present and that is simply because it just in my opinion is quite useful. So it is very useful and so if you are going to say that let us focus on those kids that have different cultures I am like those kids that have different cultures need mindfulness more in my opinion. Because it is just much harder for them in the international schools when they come when they have a different culture to the school or their friends that are basically quite a lot. Not as much in sixth form because you are dealing with adults with more social skills almost but down in primary where students are a little bit brutal and ruthless and they just

say what is instantly on their mind and really focus on differences that is just what I think not in a negative way it is just how they can behave then there, kids need mindfulness.

I: What advice would you give to someone who is considering implementing mindfulness in their school?

P: You need to make sure the SLT are on board. I have been in schools where they are not on board and it is a drain they are like not supportive do not want to give you extra time do not want to fund you that is a drain. In schools where they are pro-mindfulness and they want to and they will give you a budget, CPD times and training times things like that you are looking at quite a nice possibility of mindfulness being useful. I would say you will probably will not see any changes in the students with mindfulness when everything is going okay but in those moments where things get it a bit too far mindfulness is unbelievably powerful in my opinion.

I: Okay, thank you very much.

Sample 5

I: And what experience do you have in implementing mindfulness with students who have a different home culture to the school? For example, if you worked in a western international school this would apply to students who were not from western backgrounds.

P: Quite a few of my students are not from western backgrounds and we are a western school, we are a western European registered international school if you want to describe it like that and one of the things I would say is that there is a lot masculinity is a big part of the culture and mindfulness or meditation is not really seen as that masculine. So you can get an issue with regards to that, that can be a problem.

I: Did you feel there were any differences after the intervention between the groups who experienced mindfulness and those that did not?

P: Particularly after the pandemic particularly because mindfulness just seemed to be like before the pandemic, what I mean is that before the pandemic not really and it definitely did not help with grades it just seemed to be just something that we were doing that was taking a lot of training up and felt a bit nice I would say. Whereas after the pandemic it seemed to be very useful like just really useful in I do not know how to describe this, after the pandemic yes, I think one of the things we saw was just better behaved students and less panic attacks and less anxiety. I think those students that had to do it did get a benefit but before the pandemic not really.

References

Abacioglu, C. S., Volman, M., & Fischer, A. H. (2020). Teachers' multicultural attitudes and perspective taking abilities as factors in culturally responsive teaching. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, *90*(3), 736–752. https://doi.org/10.1111/bjep.12328

Adegboye, D., Williams, F., Collishaw, S., Shelton, K., Langley, K., Hobson, C., Burley, D., & Van Goozen, S. (2021). Understanding why the COVID‑19 pandemic‑related lockdown increases mental health difficulties in vulnerable young children. *JCPP Advances*, *1*(1), e12005. https://doi.org/10.1111/jcv2.12005

Ainsworth, B., Atkinson, M. J., AlBedah, E., Duncan, S., Groot, J., Jacobsen, P., James, A., Jenkins, T. A., Kylisova, K., Marks, E., Osborne, E. L., Remskar, M., & Underhill, R. (2023). Current Tensions and Challenges in Mindfulness Research and Practice. *Journal of Contemporary Psychotherapy*, *53*(4), 343–348. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10879-023-09584-9

Allan, M. (2002). Cultural Borderlands: A Case Study of Cultural Dissonance in an International School. *Journal of Research in International Education*, *1*(1), 63–90. https://doi.org/10.1177/1475240902001001269

Allen, J. (2019). *The productive graduate student writer: how to manage your process, time, and energy to write your research proposal, thesis, and dissertation--and get published* (First edition). Stylus Publishing.

Altinyelken, H. K. (2018). PROMOTING THE PSYCHO-SOCIAL WELL-BEING OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS THROUGH MINDFULNESS: A FOCUS ON REGULATING DIFFICULT EMOTIONS. *Contemporary Buddhism*, *19*(2), 185–202. https://doi.org/10.1080/14639947.2019.1572306

Altinyelken, H. K., Hoek, L., & Jiang, L. (2020). Improving the psychosocial wellbeing of international students: the relevance of mindfulness. *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling*, *48*(4), 524–536. https://doi.org/10.1080/03069885.2019.1600189

Antonova, E., Schlosser, K., Pandey, R., & Kumari, V. (2021). Coping With COVID-19: Mindfulness-Based Approaches for Mitigating Mental Health Crisis. *Frontiers in Psychiatry*, *12*, 563417. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyt.2021.563417

Attard, C. (2013). "If I had to pick any subject, it wouldn't be maths": foundations for engagement with mathematics during the middle years. *Mathematics Education Research Journal*, *25*(4), 569–587. https://doi.org/10.1007/s13394-013-0081-8

Bagnall, C. L., Skipper, Y., & Fox, C. L. (2022). Primary‑secondary school transition under Covid‑19: Exploring the perceptions and experiences of children, parents/guardians, and teachers. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, *92*(3), 1011–1033. https://doi.org/10.1111/bjep.12485

Bark, C., & Brooks, G. (2016). How can children with mild literacy difficulties be supported at the transition to secondary school? A small-scale quasi-experimental study. *British Journal of Special Education*, *43*(4), 373–393. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8578.12158

Bassey, M. (1999). *Case Study Research in Educational Settings*. Open University Press.

Bates, J. (2013a). Administrator perceptions of transition programs in international secondary schools. *Journal of Research in International Education*, *12*(1), 85–102. https://doi.org/10.1177/1475240913478078

Bates, J. (2013b). Administrator perceptions of transition programs in international secondary schools. *Journal of Research in International Education*, *12*(1), 85–102. https://doi.org/10.1177/1475240913478078

Beauchemin, J., Hutchins, T. L., & Patterson, F. (2008). Mindfulness Meditation May Lessen Anxiety, Promote Social Skills, and Improve Academic Performance Among Adolescents With Learning Disabilities. *Complementary Health Practice Review*, *13*(1), 34–45. https://doi.org/10.1177/1533210107311624

Berry, J. W. (2005). Acculturation: Living successfully in two cultures. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *29*(6), 697–712. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2005.07.013

Besser, A., Flett, G. L., & Zeigler-Hill, V. (2022). Adaptability to a sudden transition to online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic: Understanding the challenges for students. *Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in Psychology*, *8*(2), 85–105. https://doi.org/10.1037/stl0000198

Bhattacherjee, A. (2012). *Social Science Research: Principles, Methods, and Practices.* University of South Florida Scholar Commons.

Bicknell, B., & Riley, T. (2012). Investigating transitions in mathematics from multiple perspectives. *Mathematics Education Research Journal*, *24*(1), 1–17. https://doi.org/10.1007/s13394-011-0027-y

Boado, H. C. (2011). Primary and secondary effects in the explanation of disadvantage in education: the children of immigrant families in France. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, *32*(3), 407–430. https://doi.org/10.1080/01425692.2011.559341

Bond, L., Butler, H., Thomas, L., Carlin, J., Glover, S., Bowes, G., & Patton, G. (2007). Social and School Connectedness in Early Secondary School as Predictors of Late Teenage Substance Use, Mental Health, and Academic Outcomes. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, *40*(4), 357.e9-357.e18. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2006.10.013

Bradbury, H. (2015). *The SAGE Handbook of Action Research*. SAGE Publications Ltd. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781473921290

Brandenburg, R., & McDonough, S. (Eds.). (2019). *Ethics, Self-Study Research Methodology and Teacher Education* (Vol. 20). Springer Singapore. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-32-9135-5

Brewin, M., & Statham, J. (2011). Supporting the transition from primary school to secondary school for children who are Looked After. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, *27*(4), 365–381. https://doi.org/10.1080/02667363.2011.624301

Brown, P. (2008). A Review of the Literature on Case Study Research. *Canadian Journal for New Scholars in Education*, *1*(1).

Bryman, A. (2016). *Social research methods* (Fifth Edition). Oxford University Press.

Bunnell, T. (2019). Developing and institutionalising the 'Internationally-Minded School': The role of the 'Numerous Fs.' *Journal of Research in International Education*, *18*(2), 186–198. https://doi.org/10.1177/1475240919865792

Burgess, R. G. (Ed.). (1989). *The Ethics of educational research*. Falmer Press.

Burgess, S., Johnston, R., Key, T., Propper, C., & Wilson, D. (2008). The transition of pupils from primary to secondary school in England. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, *33*(3), 388–403. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-5661.2008.00305.x

Burgoon, J. K., Berger, C. R., & Waldron, V. R. (2000). Mindfulness and Interpersonal Communication. *Journal of Social Issues*, *56*(1), 105–127. https://doi.org/10.1111/0022-4537.00154

Burke, C. A. (2010). Mindfulness-Based Approaches with Children and Adolescents: A Preliminary Review of Current Research in an Emergent Field. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, *19*(2), 133–144. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-009-9282-x

Cacioppo, J. T., & Patrick, W. (2009). *Loneliness: human nature and the need for social connection* (1. publ. as a Norton paperback). Norton.

Campbell, D. T., & Stanley, J. C. (2011). *Experimental and quasi-experimental designs for research*. Wadsworth.

Cantali, D. (2019). Moving to secondary school for children with ASN: a systematic review of international literature. *British Journal of Special Education*, *46*(1), 29–52. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8578.12258

Cantley, I., O'Meara, N., Prendergast, M., Harbison, L., & O'Hara, C. (2021). Framework for analysing continuity in students' learning experiences during primary to secondary transition in mathematics. *Irish Educational Studies*, *40*(1), 37–49. https://doi.org/10.1080/03323315.2020.1779108

Castellanos, R., Yildiz Spinel, M., Phan, V., Orengo-Aguayo, R., Humphreys, K. L., & Flory, K. (2020a). A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of Cultural Adaptations of Mindfulness-Based

Interventions for Hispanic Populations. *Mindfulness*, *11*(2), 317–332.

https://doi.org/10.1007/s12671-019-01210-x

Castellanos, R., Yildiz Spinel, M., Phan, V., Orengo-Aguayo, R., Humphreys, K. L., & Flory, K.

(2020b). A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of Cultural Adaptations of Mindfulness-Based

Interventions for Hispanic Populations. *Mindfulness*, *11*(2), 317–332.

https://doi.org/10.1007/s12671-019-01210-x

Caulfield, C., Hill, M., Shelton, A., University of Glasgow, & Scottish Centre for Research in

Education. (2005). *The experiences of black and minority ethnic young people following the

transition to secondary school*. SCRE Centre.

Charoensukmongkol, P. (2016). The role of mindfulness on employee psychological reactions to

mergers and acquisitions. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, *29*(5), 816–831.

https://doi.org/10.1108/JOCM-05-2015-0068

Charoensukmongkol, P. (2020). The Efficacy of Cultural Intelligence for Adaptive Selling Behaviors

in Cross-Cultural Selling: The Moderating Effect of Trait Mindfulness. *Journal of Global Marketing*,

33(3), 141–157. https://doi.org/10.1080/08911762.2019.1654586

Cockburn, L. (2002). Children and Young People Living in Changing Worlds: The Process of

Assessing and Understanding the "Third Culture Kid." *School Psychology International*, *23*(4),

475–485. https://doi.org/10.1177/0143034302234008

Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2013). *Research Methods in Education* (0 ed.). Routledge.

https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203720967

Courtois, A., & Donnelly, M. (2024). Racial capitalism and the ordinary extractivism of British elite

schools overseas. Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education, 45(3), 432–449.

https://doi.org/10.1080/01596306.2024.2335008

Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: choosing

among five approaches* (3rd ed). SAGE Publications.

Creswell, J. W., & Piano, V. L. (2017). *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications.

Dai, Z., Jing, S., Wang, H., Xiao, W., Huang, Y., Chen, X., Fu, J., Pan, C., Tang, Q., Wang, H., & Su, X. (2022). Mindfulness-based online intervention on mental health among undergraduate nursing students during coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic in Beijing, China: A randomized controlled trial. *Frontiers in Psychiatry*, *13*, 949477. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyt.2022.949477

Darmody, M. (2012). Institutional Habitus and Secondary School Transitions: Comparative Study of Ireland and Estonia. *Research in Comparative and International Education*, *7*(4), 530–546. https://doi.org/10.2304/rcie.2012.7.4.530

Darragh, L. (2013). Constructing confidence and identities of belonging in mathematics at the transition to secondary school. *Research in Mathematics Education*, *15*(3), 215–229. https://doi.org/10.1080/14794802.2013.803775

Davidson, R. J., & Kaszniak, A. W. (2015). Conceptual and methodological issues in research on mindfulness and meditation. *American Psychologist*, *70*(7), 581–592. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0039512

Daw, B. (2024). Glocalising education: Reflections from an international school in Delhi, India. Journal of Research in International Education, 23(1), 75–88. https://doi.org/10.1177/14752409241243000

De Vibe, M., Solhaug, I., Tyssen, R., Friborg, O., Rosenvinge, J. H., Sørlie, T., Halland, E., & Bjørndal, A. (2015). Does Personality Moderate the Effects of Mindfulness Training for Medical and Psychology Students? *Mindfulness*, *6*(2), 281–289. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12671-013-0258-y

Demircioglu, S., & Cakir, C. (2016). Intercultural Competence of Students in International Baccalaureate World Schools in Turkey and Abroad. *International Education Studies*, *9*(9), 1. https://doi.org/10.5539/ies.v9n9p1

201

Demonty, I., Vlassis, J., & Fagnant, A. (2018). Algebraic thinking, pattern activities and knowledge for teaching at the transition between primary and secondary school. *Educational Studies in Mathematics*, *99*(1), 1–19. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10649-018-9820-9

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.). (2011). *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (4th ed). Sage.

Deveney, B. (2005). An investigation into aspects of Thai culture and its impact on Thai students in an international school in Thailand. *Journal of Research in International Education*, *4*(2), 153–171. https://doi.org/10.1177/1475240905054388

Deveney, B. (2007). How well-prepared do international school teachers believe themselves to be for teaching in culturally diverse classrooms? *Journal of Research in International Education*, *6*(3), 309–332. https://doi.org/10.1177/1475240907083198

Dewaele, J.-M., & van Oudenhoven, J. P. (2009). The effect of multilingualism/multiculturalism on personality: no gain without pain for Third Culture Kids? *International Journal of Multilingualism*, *6*(4), 443–459. https://doi.org/10.1080/14790710903039906

Dillman, D. A., Smyth, J. D., & Christian, L. M. (2014). *Internet, phone, mail, and mixed-mode surveys: the tailored design method* (4th edition). Wiley.

Dillon, A., & Ali, T. (2019). Global nomads, cultural chameleons, strange ones or immigrants? An exploration of Third Culture Kid terminology with reference to the United Arab Emirates. *Journal of Research in International Education*, *18*(1), 77–89. https://doi.org/10.1177/1475240919835013

Dooley, L. M. (2002). Case Study Research and Theory Building. *Advances in Developing Human Resources*, *4*(3), 335–354. https://doi.org/10.1177/1523422302043007

Doucet, A., & Mathner, N. (n.d.). Knowing Responsibly: Linking Ethics, Research Practice and Epistemology. In N. Mathner, J. Birch, Jessop, & T. Miller (Eds.), *Ethics in qualitative research*. Sage Publications Ltd.

Dul, J., & Hak, T. (2007). *Case study methodology in business research*. Elsevier.

Dunbar, G. (Ed.). (2005). *Evaluating Research Methods in Psychology*. The British Psychological Society and Blackwell Publishing Ltd. https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470776537

Dunleavy, P. (2003). *Authoring a PhD: how to plan, draft, write and finish a doctoral dissertation*. https://nls.ldls.org.uk/welcome.html?ark:/81055/vdc_100028563660.0x000001

Dunning, D., Ahmed, S., Foulkes, L., Griffin, C., Griffiths, K., Leung, J. T., Parker, J., Piera Pi-Sunyer, B., Sakhardande, A., Bennett, M., Haag, C., Montero-Marin, J., Packman, D., Vainre, M., Watson, P., The MYRIAD Team, Kuyken, W., Williams, J. M. G., Ukoumunne, O. C., … Dalgleish, T. (2022). The impact of mindfulness training in early adolescence on affective executive control, and on later mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic: a randomised controlled trial. *Evidence Based Mental Health*, *25*(3), 110–116. https://doi.org/10.1136/ebmental-2022-300460

Dunning, D., Tudor, K., Radley, L., Dalrymple, N., Funk, J., Vainre, M., Ford, T., Montero-Marin, J., Kuyken, W., & Dalgleish, T. (2022). Do mindfulness-based programmes improve the cognitive skills, behaviour and mental health of children and adolescents? An updated meta-analysis of randomised controlled trials. *Evidence Based Mental Health*, *25*(3), 135–142. https://doi.org/10.1136/ebmental-2022-300464

Dvořáková, K., Greenberg, M. T., & Roeser, R. W. (2019). On the role of mindfulness and compassion skills in students' coping, well-being, and development across the transition to college: A conceptual analysis. *Stress and Health*, *35*(2), 146–156. https://doi.org/10.1002/smi.2850

Dvořáková, K., Kishida, M., Li, J., Elavsky, S., Broderick, P. C., Agrusti, M. R., & Greenberg, M. T. (2017). Promoting healthy transition to college through mindfulness training with first-year college students: Pilot randomized controlled trial. *Journal of American College Health*, *65*(4), 259–267. https://doi.org/10.1080/07448481.2017.1278605

Earley, C., & Peterson, R. S. (2004). The Elusive Cultural Chameleon: Cultural Intelligence as a

New Approach to Intercultural Training for the Global Manager. *Academy of Management*

Learning and Education, *3*(1), 100–115.

Efron, S. E., & Ravid, R. (2020a). *Action research in education: a practical guide* (Second edition).

The Guilford Press.

Efron, S. E., & Ravid, R. (2020b). *Action research in education: a practical guide* (Second edition).

The Guilford Press.

Emenike, N. W., & Plowright, D. (2017). Third culture indigenous kids: neo-colonialism and student

identities in Nigerian international schools. *Journal of Research in International Education*, *16*(1),

3–17. https://doi.org/10.1177/1475240917692757

Emerson, L.-M., De Diaz, N. N., Sherwood, A., Waters, A., & Farrell, L. (2020). Mindfulness

interventions in schools: Integrity and feasibility of implementation. *International Journal of*

Behavioral Development, *44*(1), 62–75. https://doi.org/10.1177/0165025419866906

Evans, D., & Field, A. P. (2020). Predictors of mathematical attainment trajectories across the

primary-to-secondary education transition: parental factors and the home environment. *Royal*

Society Open Science, *7*(7), 200422. https://doi.org/10.1098/rsos.200422

Evans, D. G., Gruba, P., & Zobel, J. (2011). *How to write a better thesis* (3rd ed). Melbourne

University Press.

Ezra, R. (2003). Culture, Language and Personality in the Context of the Internationally Mobile

Child. *Journal of Research in International Education*, *2*(2), 123–149.

https://doi.org/10.1177/14752409030022001

Fail, H., Thompson, J., & Walker, G. (2004). Belonging, identity and Third Culture Kids: Life

histories of former international school students. *Journal of Research in International Education*,

3(3), 319–338. https://doi.org/10.1177/1475240904047358

Fanning, S., & Burns, E. (2017). How an Antipodean Perspective of International Schooling

Challenges Third Culture Kid (TCK) Conceptualisation. *Journal of Research in International*

Education, *16*(2), 147–163. https://doi.org/10.1177/1475240917722277

Faraji, M., Talepasand, S., & Boogar, I. (2019). Effectiveness of mindfulness-based cognitive

therapy for child on bullying behaviors among children. *International Archives of Health Sciences*,

6(1), 52. https://doi.org/10.4103/iahs.iahs_54_18

Farris, S. R., Grazzi, L., Holley, M., Dorsett, A., Xing, K., Pierce, C. R., Estave, P. M., O'Connell,

N., & Wells, R. E. (2021a). Online Mindfulness May Target Psychological Distress and Mental

Health during COVID-19. *Global Advances in Health and Medicine*, *10*, 216495612110024.

https://doi.org/10.1177/21649561211002461

Farris, S. R., Grazzi, L., Holley, M., Dorsett, A., Xing, K., Pierce, C. R., Estave, P. M., O'Connell,

N., & Wells, R. E. (2021b). Online Mindfulness May Target Psychological Distress and Mental

Health during COVID-19. *Global Advances in Health and Medicine*, *10*, 216495612110024.

https://doi.org/10.1177/21649561211002461

Finkelstein-Fox, L., Park, C. L., & Riley, K. E. (2018). Mindfulness and emotion regulation:

promoting well-being during the transition to college. *Anxiety, Stress, & Coping*, *31*(6), 639–653.

https://doi.org/10.1080/10615806.2018.1518635

Firestone, W. A. (1993). Alternative Arguments for Generalizing From Data as Applied to

Qualitative Research. *Educational Researcher*, *22*(4), 16–23.

https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X022004016

Fisher, H. (2017). 'White British girls on free school meals': power, resistance and resilience at

secondary school transition. *Gender and Education*, *29*(7), 907–925.

https://doi.org/10.1080/09540253.2016.1184236

Flick, U. (2022). *Doing interview research: the essential how to guide*. Sage Publications.

Forester, J., & Laws, D. (2009). Towards a Naturalistic Research Ethic: Or how Mediators must Act Well to Learn, if they Are to Practice Effectively. In L. F. Piccolo & H. Thomas (Eds.), *Ethics and planning research*. Ashgate Pub.

Forlin, C., Sin, K. K.-F., & Maclean, R. (2013). Transition for a Student With Special Educational Needs From Primary to Secondary School in Hong Kong. *Australasian Journal of Special Education*, *37*(1), 49–63. https://doi.org/10.1017/jse.2013.8

Fowers, B. J. (2015). *The evolution of ethics: human sociality and the emergence of ethical mindedness*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Frazier, E., & Van Riemsdijk, M. (2021). When 'Self-Sufficiency' Is Not Sufficient: Refugee Integration Discourses of US Resettlement Actors and the Offer of Refuge. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, *34*(3), 3113–3130. https://doi.org/10.1093/jrs/feaa119

Freeman, G. P. (1997). Immigration as a source of political discontent and frustration in Western democracies. *Studies in Comparative International Development*, *32*(3), 42–64. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02687330

Gärtner, C. (2013a). Enhancing Readiness for Change by Enhancing Mindfulness. *Journal of Change Management*, *13*(1), 52–68. https://doi.org/10.1080/14697017.2013.768433

Gärtner, C. (2013b). Enhancing Readiness for Change by Enhancing Mindfulness. *Journal of Change Management*, *13*(1), 52–68. https://doi.org/10.1080/14697017.2013.768433

Gerring, J. (2006). *Case Study Research: Principles and Practices*. Cambridge University Press.

Ghorbani, N., Watson, P. J., & Weathington, B. L. (2009). Mindfulness in Iran and the United States: Cross-Cultural Structural Complexity and Parallel Relationships with Psychological Adjustment. *Current Psychology*, *28*(4), 211–224. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-009-9060-3

Gilbert, K. R. (2008). Loss and Grief between and Among Cultures: The Experience of Third Culture Kids. *Illness, Crisis & Loss*, *16*(2), 93–109. https://doi.org/10.2190/IL.16.2.a

Gillespie, A., & Harmer, C. J. (2022). Can You Feel the Burn? Using Neuroimaging to Illuminate the Mechanisms of Mindfulness Interventions for Pain. *American Journal of Psychiatry*, *179*(10), 705–707. https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.ajp.20220712

Gillham, B. (2005). *Case study research methods*. Continuum.

Godara, M., Silveira, S., Matthäus, H., Heim, C., Voelkle, M., Hecht, M., Binder, E. B., & Singer, T. (2021). Investigating differential effects of socio-emotional and mindfulness-based online interventions on mental health, resilience and social capacities during the COVID-19 pandemic: The study protocol. *PLOS ONE*, *16*(11), e0256323. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0256323

Gomm, R., Hammersley, M., & Foster, P. (Eds.). (2000). *Case study method: key issues, key texts*. SAGE.

Gondo, M., Patterson, K. D. W., & Palacios, S. T. (2013). Mindfulness and the Development of a Readiness for Change. *Journal of Change Management*, *13*(1), 36–51. https://doi.org/10.1080/14697017.2013.768431

González-García, M., Álvarez, J. C., Pérez, E. Z., Fernandez-Carriba, S., & López, J. G. (2021). Feasibility of a Brief Online Mindfulness and Compassion-Based Intervention to Promote Mental Health Among University Students During the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Mindfulness*, *12*(7), 1685–1695. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12671-021-01632-6

Gray, S., Saville, K., Hargreaves, E., Jones, E., & Perryman, J. (2021). *Moving Up*. University College London (IoE). https://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/id/eprint/10126990/

Gu, S., Li, Y., Liang, F., Feng, R., Zeng, Z., & Wang, F. (2020). The Mediating Effects of Coping Style on the Effects of Breath Count Mindfulness Training on Depressive Symptoms among International Students in China. *Neural Plasticity*, *2020*, 1–8. https://doi.org/10.1155/2020/8859251

Hammersley, M., & Traianou, A. (2012). *Ethics in qualitative research: controversies and contexts*. SAGE Publications.

Hancock, D. R., & Algozzine, R. (2017). *Doing case study research: a practical guide for beginning researchers* (Third edition). Teachers College Press.

Hannaford, J. (2016). Digital worlds as sites of belonging for Third Culture Kids: A new literacies perspective. *Journal of Research in International Education*, *15*(3), 253–265. https://doi.org/10.1177/1475240916677442

Harrison, H., Birks, M., Franklin, R., & Mills, J. (2017). Case Study Research: Foundations and Methodological Orientations. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, *Vol 18*, No 1 (2017). https://doi.org/10.17169/FQS-18.1.2655

Harwood, R., & Bailey, K. (2012). Defining and Evaluating International Mindedness in a School Context. *International Schools Journal*, *31*(2).

Hayden, M., & Thompson, J. (Eds.). (2015). *The SAGE Handbook of International Education* (2nd ed.). SAGE.

Hayden, M., & Thompson, J. J. (2008). *International schools: growth and influence*. UNESCO: International Institute for Educational Planning.

Holmes, A. G. D. (n.d.). Researcher Positionality - A Consideration of Its Influence and Place in Qualitative Research - A New Researcher Guide. *Shanlax International of Education*, *8*(4).

Howard, S., Reubke, P., & Goetheanum (Eds.). (2020). *Transitions in childhood from birth to 14 years: significance, challenges and consequences : the tasks for educators and teachers*.

Hughes, L. A., Banks, P., & Terras, M. M. (2013). Secondary school transition for children with special educational needs: a literature review. *Support for Learning*, *28*(1), 24–34. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9604.12012

Hustinx, P. W. J. (2002). School Careers of Pupils of Ethnic Minority Background After the Transition to Secondary Education: Is the Ethnic Factor Always Negative? *Educational Research and Evaluation*, *8*(2), 169–195. https://doi.org/10.1076/edre.8.2.169.3860

Iphofen, R., & Tolich, M. (2018). *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research Ethics*. SAGE Publications Ltd. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781526435446

Israel, M., & Hay, I. (2006). *Research Ethics for Social Scientists*. SAGE Publications, Ltd. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781849209779

Jackson, C., & Warin, J. (2000). The Importance of Gender as an Aspect of Identity at Key

Transition Points in Compulsory Education. *British Educational Research Journal*, *26*(3), 375–391.

https://doi.org/10.1080/713651558

Jackson, M. (2005). The role of the host culture as a resource for developing intercultural

understanding in a Dutch international secondary school. *Journal of Research in International*

Education, *4*(2), 193–209. https://doi.org/10.1177/1475240905054390

Jacobsen, P. C., Ainsworth, B., Atkinson, M., AlBedah, E., Duncan, S., Groot, J., James, A.,

Jenkins, T., Kylisova, K., Marks, E., Osborne, E., Remskar, M., & Underhill, R. (2022). *Current*

tensions and challenges in mindfulness research and practice [Preprint]. PsyArXiv.

https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/39zmr

Jidesjö, A. (2012). Different content orientations in science and technology among primary and

secondary boys and girls in Sweden: Implications for the transition from primary to secondary

school? *Nordic Studies in Science Education*, *4*(2).

Jordan, J.-A., McRorie, M., & Ewing, C. (2010). Gender differences in the role of emotional

intelligence during the primary–secondary school transition. *Emotional and Behavioural*

Difficulties, *15*(1), 37–47. https://doi.org/10.1080/13632750903512415

Ju Lee, Y., Bain, S. K., & McCallum, R. S. (2007). Improving Creative Problem-Solving in a

Sample of Third Culture Kids. *School Psychology International*, *28*(4), 449–463.

https://doi.org/10.1177/0143034307084135

Kaufman, S. R., & Hwang, A. (2015). Cultural intelligence and mindfulness in two French banks

operating in the US environment. *Management Research Review*, *38*(9), 930–951.

https://doi.org/10.1108/MRR-02-2014-0035

Killguss, B. M. (2008). Identity and the Need to Belong: Understanding Identity Formation and

Place in the Loves of Global Nomads. *Illness, Crisis & Loss*, *16*(2), 137–151.

Kock, M., Kuppens, P., Van Der Gucht, K., & Raes, F. (2021). Mindfulness May Buffer Psychological Distress in Adolescents during the COVID-19 Pandemic: The Differential Role of Mindfulness Facets. *Psychologica Belgica*, *61*(1), 356–376. https://doi.org/10.5334/pb.1093

Kohlbacher, F. (2006). The Use of Qualitative Content Analysis in Case Study Research. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, *Vol 7*, No 1 (2006): Learning About Risk. https://doi.org/10.17169/FQS-7.1.75

Koini, C., Jindal-Snape, D., & Robb, A. (2023). Children's and parents' perspectives of their multiple and multi-dimensional international transitions: Longitudinal study across four time points. Journal of Research in International Education, 22(3), 256–277. https://doi.org/10.1177/14752409231217222

Konstantinos, A., Sdrolias, A., Tiandafillos, A., & Triandafillidis. (2008). The Transition to Secondary School Geometry: Can there be a 'Chain of School Mathematics'? *Educational Studies in Mathematics.*, *67*(2), 159–169.

Kristen, C. (2000). Ethnic Differences in Educational Placement: The Transition from Primary to Secondary Schooling. *Arbeitspapiere – Manheimer Zentrum Für Europäische Sozialforschung*, *32*.

Kuyken, W., Ball, S., Crane, C., Ganguli, P., Jones, B., Montero-Marin, J., Nuthall, E., Raja, A., Taylor, L., Tudor, K., Viner, R. M., Allwood, M., Aukland, L., Dunning, D., Casey, T., Dalrymple, N., De Wilde, K., Farley, E.-R., Harper, J., … Williams, J. M. G. (2022a). Effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of universal school-based mindfulness training compared with normal school provision in reducing risk of mental health problems and promoting well-being in adolescence: the MYRIAD cluster randomised controlled trial. *Evidence Based Mental Health*, *25*(3), 99–109. https://doi.org/10.1136/ebmental-2021-300396

Kuyken, W., Ball, S., Crane, C., Ganguli, P., Jones, B., Montero-Marin, J., Nuthall, E., Raja, A., Taylor, L., Tudor, K., Viner, R. M., Allwood, M., Aukland, L., Dunning, D., Casey, T., Dalrymple, N., De Wilde, K., Farley, E.-R., Harper, J., … Williams, J. M. G. (2022b). Effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of universal school-based mindfulness training compared with normal school

provision in reducing risk of mental health problems and promoting well-being in adolescence: the MYRIAD cluster randomised controlled trial. *Evidence Based Mental Health*, *25*(3), 99–109. https://doi.org/10.1136/ebmental-2021-300396

Laine, M. de. (2000). *Fieldwork, participation and practice: ethics and dilemmas in qualitative research*. SAGE.

Lather, P. (2006). Paradigm proliferation as a good thing to think with: teaching research in education as a wild profusion. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, *19*(1), 35–57. https://doi.org/10.1080/09518390500450144

Lau, E. Y. H., & Power, T. G. (2018). Parental involvement during the transition to primary school: Examining bidirectional relations with school adjustment. *Children and Youth Services Review*, *88*, 257–266. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2018.03.018

Lee-Treweek, G., & Linkogle, S. (Eds.). (2000). *Danger in the field: risk and ethics in social research*. Routledge.

Leland, M. (2015). Mindfulness and Student Success. *Journal of Adult Education*, *44*(1), 19–24.

Lemay, D. J., Bazelais, P., & Doleck, T. (2021). Transition to online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Computers in Human Behavior Reports*, *4*, 100130. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chbr.2021.100130

Lemke-Westcott, T., & Johnson, B. (2013). When culture and learning styles matter: A Canadian university with Middle-Eastern students. *Journal of Research in International Education*, *12*(1), 66–84. https://doi.org/10.1177/1475240913480105

Lijadi, A., A., & Schalkwyk. (2014). Narratives of Third Culture Kids: Commitment and Reticence in Social Relationships. *The Qualitative Report*, *19*(49), 1–18.

Lijadi, A. A., & van Schalkwyk, G. J. (2018). "The international schools are not so international after all": The educational experiences of Third Culture Kids. International Journal of School & Educational Psychology, 6(1), 50–61. https://doi.org/10.1080/21683603.2016.1261056

Lim, S. J. J., & Hoot, J. L. (2015). Bullying in an increasingly diverse school population: A socio-ecological model analysis. *School Psychology International*, *36*(3), 268–282. https://doi.org/10.1177/0143034315571158

Limberg, D., & Lambie, G. (2011). Third Culture Kids: Implications for Professional School Counseling. *Professional School Counseling*, *15*(1), 45–54. https://doi.org/10.5330/PSC.n.2011-15.45

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Sage Publications.

Liu, X., Xiao, R., & Tang, W. (2022a). The Impact of School-Based Mindfulness Intervention on Bullying Behaviors Among Teenagers: Mediating Effect of Self-Control. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, *37*(21–22), NP20459–NP20481. https://doi.org/10.1177/08862605211052047

Liu, X., Xiao, R., & Tang, W. (2022b). The Impact of School-Based Mindfulness Intervention on Bullying Behaviors Among Teenagers: Mediating Effect of Self-Control. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, *37*(21–22), NP20459–NP20481. https://doi.org/10.1177/08862605211052047

Liu, X., Zhu, J., Sun, Y., & Wang, Y. (n.d.). Effectiveness of online mindfulness-based interventions in improving mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic: A systematic review and meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials. *PLOS ONE*, *16*(9).

Lo Piccolo, F., & Thomas, H. (Eds.). (2009). *Ethics and planning research*. Ashgate Pub.

Lowton, K. (2018). He Said, She Said, We Said: Ethical Issues in Conducting Dyadic Interviews. In R. Iphofen (Ed.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research ethics*. SAGE.

Lucassen, L. (2018). Peeling an onion: the "refugee crisis" from a historical perspective. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *41*(3), 383–410. https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2017.1355975

Lucey, H., & Reay, D. (2000). Identities in Transition: Anxiety and excitement in the move to secondary school. *Oxford Review of Education*, *26*(2), 191–205. https://doi.org/10.1080/713688522

Lustig, M. W., & Koester, J. (2017). *Intercultural competence: interpersonal communication across cultures* (Eighth Edition). Pearson.

M Foody, & Samara, M. (2018). Considering Mindfulness Techniques in School-based Anti-bullying Programmes. *Journal of New Approaches in Educational Research (NAER Journal)*, *7*(1), 3–9.

Ma, K. (2023). Exploring the changing pathway to cultivating an elite 'international' child in China. SHS Web of Conferences, 157, 04008. https://doi.org/10.1051/shsconf/202315704008

Maras, P., & Aveling, E.-L. (2006). Students with special educational needs: transitions from primary to secondary school. *British Journal of Special Education*, *33*(4), 196–203. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8578.2006.00439.x

Matiz, A., Fabbro, F., Paschetto, A., Cantone, D., Paolone, A. R., & Crescentini, C. (2020). Positive Impact of Mindfulness Meditation on Mental Health of Female Teachers during the COVID-19 Outbreak in Italy. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, *17*(18), 6450. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17186450

Matiz, A., Fabbro, F., Paschetto, A., Cantone, D., Paolone, A. R., & Crescentini, C. (2020). Positive Impact of Mindfulness Meditation on Mental Health of Female Teachers during the COVID-19 Outbreak in Italy. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, *17*(18), 6450. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17186450

Mauthner, M. L. (Ed.). (2002). *Ethics in qualitative research*. Sage Publications Ltd.

McCoy, S., Shevlin, M., & Rose, R. (2020). Secondary school transition for students with special educational needs in Ireland. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, *35*(2), 154–170. https://doi.org/10.1080/08856257.2019.1628338

McMillan, K., & Weyers, J. D. B. (2011). *How to write dissertations & project reports* (2nd ed). Prentice Hall.

Mendelson, T., Greenberg, M. T., Dariotis, J. K., Gould, L. F., Rhoades, B. L., & Leaf, P. J. (2010). Feasibility and Preliminary Outcomes of a School-Based Mindfulness Intervention for Urban Youth. *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology*, *38*(7), 985–994. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10802-010-9418-x

213

Metzner, F., Wichmann, M. L., & Mays, D. (2020). Educational transition outcomes of children and adolescents with clinically relevant emotional or behavioural disorders: results of a systematic review. *British Journal of Special Education*, *47*(2), 230–257. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8578.12310

Midgley, W., Davies, A., Oliver, M. E., & Danaher, P. A. (Eds.). (2014). *Echoes*. SensePublishers. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-6209-491-8

Miller, S. T., Wiggins, G. M., & Feather, K. A. (2020a). Growing up Globally: Third Culture Kids' Experience with Transition, Identity, and Well-Being. *International Journal for the Advancement of Counselling*, *42*(4), 414–423. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10447-020-09412-y

Miller, S. T., Wiggins, G. M., & Feather, K. A. (2020b). Growing up Globally: Third Culture Kids' Experience with Transition, Identity, and Well-Being. *International Journal for the Advancement of Counselling*, *42*(4), 414–423. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10447-020-09412-y

Miller, T., & Bell, L. (2002). Consenting to What? Issues of Access, Gate-keeping and 'Informed' Consent. In *Ethics in qualitative research*. Sage Publications Ltd.

Montero-Marin, J., Taylor, L., Crane, C., Greenberg, M. T., Ford, T. J., Williams, J. M. G., García-Campayo, J., Sonley, A., Lord, L., Dalgleish, T., Blakemore, S.-J., MYRIAD team, & Kuyken, W. (2021a). Teachers "finding peace in a frantic world": An experimental study of self-taught and instructor-led mindfulness program formats on acceptability, effectiveness, and mechanisms. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *113*(8), 1689–1708. https://doi.org/10.1037/edu0000542

Montero-Marin, J., Taylor, L., Crane, C., Greenberg, M. T., Ford, T. J., Williams, J. M. G., García-Campayo, J., Sonley, A., Lord, L., Dalgleish, T., Blakemore, S.-J., MYRIAD team, & Kuyken, W. (2021b). Teachers "finding peace in a frantic world": An experimental study of self-taught and instructor-led mindfulness program formats on acceptability, effectiveness, and mechanisms. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *113*(8), 1689–1708. https://doi.org/10.1037/edu0000542

Morales, A. (2015a). Factors Affecting Third Culture Kids (TCKs) Transition. *Journal of International Education Research (JIER)*, *11*(1), 51–56. https://doi.org/10.19030/jier.v11i1.9098

Morales, A. (2015b). Factors Affecting Third Culture Kids (TCKs) Transition. *Journal of International Education Research (JIER)*, *11*(1), 51–56. https://doi.org/10.19030/jier.v11i1.9098

Mowat, J. G. (2019). Supporting the transition from Primary to Secondary school for pupils with social, emotional and behavioural needs: a focus on the socio-emotional aspects of transfer for an adolescent boy. *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, *24*(1), 50–69. https://doi.org/10.1080/13632752.2018.1564498

Mullan, P., Prendeville, P., & Kinsella, W. (2018). Factors influencing the successful transition of young people with Down syndrome: XXXX. *British Journal of Special Education*, *45*(4), 371–391. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8578.12237

Murphy, L., Eduljee, N., & Croteau, K. (2020). College Student Transition to Synchronous Virtual Classes during the COVID-19 Pandemic in Northeastern United States. *Pedagogical Research*, *5*(4).

Napoli, M., Krech, P. R., & Holley, L. C. (2005). Mindfulness Training for Elementary School Students: The Attention Academy. *Journal of Applied School Psychology*, *21*(1), 99–125. https://doi.org/10.1300/J370v21n01_05

Newton, D. P. (2014). *Thinking with feeling: fostering productive thought in the classroom*. Routledge.

Nussbaum, J. F. (2015). *Oxford research encyclopedias communication*. http://communication.oxfordre.com

Nyar, A. (2021). The 'Double Transition' for First-Year Students: Understanding the Impact of Covid-19 on South Africa's First-Year University Students. *Journal for Students Affairs in Africa*, *9*(1), 77–92. https://doi.org/10.24085/jsaa.v9i1.1429

O'Brien, M. (2003). Girls and Transition to Second-level Schooling in Ireland: "Moving on" and "moving out" Correspondence : Maeve O'Brien, Department of Human Development, St Patrick's

College of Education, Drumcondra, Dublin, 9. E-mail: Obpm@eircom.net. *Gender and Education*, *15*(3), 249–267. https://doi.org/10.1080/09540250303862

Oliver, P. (2009). *The student's guide to research ethics* (Reprint). Open University Press.

Panksepp, J. (2005). *Affective neuroscience: the foundations of human and animal emotions* (1. issued as an Oxford University Press paperback). Oxford University Press.

Peacock, J. (2014a). Sati or Mindfulness? Bridging the Divide. In M. Bazzano (Ed.), *After Mindfulness* (pp. 3–22). Palgrave Macmillan UK. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137370402_1

Peacock, J. (2014b). Sati or Mindfulness? Bridging the Divide. In M. Bazzano (Ed.), *After Mindfulness* (pp. 3–22). Palgrave Macmillan UK. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137370402_1

Pereira, A. S. M., & Medeiros, R. N. M. (2023). Education in an age of inequality. *International Review of Education.* https://doi.org/10.1007/s11159-023-09934-5

Perera-Diltz, D. M., & Greenidge, W. L. (2018). Mindfulness Techniques to Promote Culturally Appropriate Engagement. *Journal of Creativity in Mental Health*, *13*(4), 490–504. https://doi.org/10.1080/15401383.2018.1459215

Perry, B. (2013). *Transitions to school - international research, policy and practice*. Springer.

Peters, R., & Brooks, R. (2016). Parental perspectives on the transition to secondary school for students with Asperger syndrome and high-functioning autism: a pilot survey study: Parental perspectives on the transition to secondary school for students with Asperger syndrome and high-functioning autism: a pilot survey study. *British Journal of Special Education*, *43*(1), 75–91. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8578.12125

Pole, C. J., & Burgess, R. G. (Eds.). (2000). *Cross-cultural case study*. JAI.

Pollock, D. C., Van Reken, R. E., & Pollock, M. V. (2017). *Third culture kids: growing up among worlds* (Third edition). Nicholas Brealey Publishing.

Poonoosamy, M. (2018). Third culture kids' sense of international mindedness: Case studies of students in two International Baccalaureate schools. *Journal of Research in International Education*, *17*(3), 207–227. https://doi.org/10.1177/1475240918806090

Pownall, M., Harris, R., & Blundell-Birtill, P. (2022). Supporting students during the transition to university in COVID-19: Five key considerations and recommendations for educators. *Psychology Learning & Teaching*, *21*(1), 3–18. https://doi.org/10.1177/14757257211032486

Pratt, S., & George, R. (2005). Transferring friendship: girls' and boys' friendships in the transition from primary to secondary school. *Children & Society*, *19*(1), 16–26. https://doi.org/10.1002/chi.830

Prendergast, M., O'Meara, N., O'Hara, C., Harbison, L., & Cantley, I. (2019). Bridging the Primary to Secondary School Mathematics Divide: Teachers' Perspectives. *Issues in Educational Research*, *29*(1), 243–260.

Probert, S. (2023). International education in Asia: The changing market. Journal of Research in International Education, 22(3), 185–200. https://doi.org/10.1177/14752409231212185

Pyvis, D., & Chapman, A. (2005). Culture shock and the international student 'offshore.' *Journal of Research in International Education*, *4*(1), 23–42. https://doi.org/10.1177/1475240905050289

Ramler, T. R., Tennison, L. R., Lynch, J., & Murphy, P. (2016). Mindfulness and the College Transition: The Efficacy of an Adapted Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Intervention in Fostering Adjustment among First-Year Students. *Mindfulness*, *7*(1), 179–188. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12671-015-0398-3

Rebolj, A. (n.d.). The case study as a type of qualitative research. *Journal of Contemporary Educational Studies*, 28–43.

Rempel, K. (2012). Mindfulness for Children and Youth: A Review of the Literature with an Argument for School-Based Implementation Méditation de pleine conscience pour les enfants et les jeunes: Survol de la littérature et argumentation pour sa mise en œuvre en milieu scolaire. *Canadian Journal of Counselling and Psychotherapy*, *46*(3), 202–220.

Reynolds, T. (2007). Friendship Networks, Social Capital and Ethnic Identity: Researching the Perspectives of Caribbean Young People in Britain. *Journal of Youth Studies*, *10*(4), 383–398. https://doi.org/10.1080/13676260701381192

Schmidt, S. (2011). Mindfulness in East and West – Is It the Same? In H. Walach, S. Schmidt, & W. B. Jonas (Eds.), *Neuroscience, Consciousness and Spirituality* (Vol. 1, pp. 23–38). Springer Netherlands. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-2079-4_2

Schneider, S. L., & Tieben, N. (2011). A healthy sorting machine? Social inequality in the transition to upper secondary education in Germany. *Oxford Review of Education*, *37*(2), 139–166. https://doi.org/10.1080/03054985.2011.559349

Schonert-Reichl, K. A., Oberle, E., Lawlor, M. S., Abbott, D., Thomson, K., Oberlander, T. F., & Diamond, A. (2015). Enhancing cognitive and social–emotional development through a simple-to-administer mindfulness-based school program for elementary school children: A randomized controlled trial. *Developmental Psychology*, *51*(1), 52–66. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0038454

Semple, R. J., Lee, J., Rosa, D., & Miller, L. F. (2010). A Randomized Trial of Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy for Children: Promoting Mindful Attention to Enhance Social-Emotional Resiliency in Children. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, *19*(2), 218–229. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-009-9301-y

Serbin, L. A., Stack, D. M., & Kingdon, D. (2013). Academic Success Across the Transition from Primary to Secondary Schooling Among Lower-Income Adolescents: Understanding the Effects of Family Resources and Gender. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, *42*(9), 1331–1347. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-013-9987-4

Sibinga, E. M. S., Webb, L., Ghazarian, S. R., & Ellen, J. M. (2016). School-Based Mindfulness Instruction: An RCT. *Pediatrics*, *137*(1), e20152532. https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2015-2532

Siddiqui, N., Gorard, S., & See, B. H. (2014). Is a Summer School Programme a Promising Intervention in Preparation for Transition from Primary to Secondary School? *International Education Studies*, *7*(7), p125. https://doi.org/10.5539/ies.v7n7p125

Simons, H. (1989). Ethics of Case Study in Educational Research and Evaluation. In R. G. Burgess (Ed.), *The Ethics of Educational Research*. Falmer Press.

Slough-Kuss, Y. (2014). Cultural diversity among heads of international schools: Potential implications for international education. *Journal of Research in International Education*, *13*(3), 218–234. https://doi.org/10.1177/1475240914553387

Managing the Transition from Primary School Mathematics to Secondary School Mathematics: Teachers' and Learners' Perspectives. (2014). *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*. https://doi.org/10.5901/mjss.2014.v5n25p205

Straffon, D. A. (2003). Assessing the intercultural sensitivity of high school students attending an international school. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *27*(4), 487–501. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0147-1767(03)00035-X

The IB Continuum of International Education. (2014). International Baccalaureate Organisation. *The IB Continuum of International Education*.

The MYRIAD team, Baer, R., Crane, C., Montero-Marin, J., Phillips, A., Taylor, L., Tickell, A., & Kuyken, W. (2021a). Frequency of Self-reported Unpleasant Events and Harm in a Mindfulness-Based Program in Two General Population Samples. *Mindfulness*, *12*(3), 763–774. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12671-020-01547-8

The MYRIAD team, Baer, R., Crane, C., Montero-Marin, J., Phillips, A., Taylor, L., Tickell, A., & Kuyken, W. (2021b). Frequency of Self-reported Unpleasant Events and Harm in a Mindfulness-Based Program in Two General Population Samples. *Mindfulness*, *12*(3), 763–774. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12671-020-01547-8

Thomas, D. C. (2006). Domain and Development of Cultural Intelligence: The Importance of Mindfulness. *Group & Organization Management*, *31*(1), 78–99. https://doi.org/10.1177/1059601105275266

Thomas, G. (2023). *How to do your research project: a guide for students* (4th edition). SAGE.

Thomas, H. (2009). Virtue Ethics and Research Ethics. In L. F. Piccolo (Ed.), *Ethics and planning research*. Ashgate Pub.

Tilke, A. (2011). *The International Baccalaureate Diploma Program and the School Library: Inquiry-Based Education*. Libraries Unlimited.

Trethewy, T., & Vanderburg, M. (2022). Raising the awareness of shortfalls of transition programs in international schools: From the perspective of a Third Culture Kid. Journal of Information Technologies and Lifelong Learning, 5(1), 214–221. https://doi.org/10.20533/jitll.2633.7681.2022.0029

Trethewy, T., Vanderburg, M., & Van Den Akker, J. (2022). Grief as an Integral Part of the Third Culture Kid Transition Experience: A Position Paper. *Journal of Research in International Education*, *21*(3), 291–298. https://doi.org/10.1177/14752409221140176

Tsegay, S. M., Wheeler, L., Kirkman, P., & Pratt-Adams, S. (2023a). Teacher Perspectives on Primary-Secondary School Transition Projects During the COVID-19 Pandemic. *SAGE Open*, *13*(2), 21582440231181384. https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440231181382

Tsegay, S. M., Wheeler, L., Kirkman, P., & Pratt-Adams, S. (2023b). Teacher Perspectives on Primary-Secondary School Transition Projects During the COVID-19 Pandemic. *SAGE Open*, *13*(2), 21582440231181384. https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440231181382

Tuleja, E. A. (2014). Developing Cultural Intelligence for Global Leadership Through Mindfulness. *Journal of Teaching in International Business*, *25*(1), 5–24. https://doi.org/10.1080/08975930.2014.881275

Tzu-Ping, Y., & Wei-Wen, C. (2017). The Relationship between Cultural Intelligence and Psychological Well-being with the Moderating Effects of Mindfulness: A Study of International Students in Taiwan. *European Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies*, *5*(1), 384. https://doi.org/10.26417/ejms.v5i1.p384-391

van de Weijer-Bergsma, E., Langenberg, G., Brandsma, R., Oort, F. J., & Bögels, S. M. (2012). The Effectiveness of a School-Based Mindfulness Training as a Program to Prevent Stress in Elementary School Children. *Mindfulness*. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12671-012-0171-9

Van Der Kleij, S. W., Burgess, A. P., Ricketts, J., & Shapiro, L. R. (2023). Tracking vocabulary and

reading growth in children from lower and higher socioeconomic backgrounds during the transition

from primary to secondary education. *Child Development*, *94*(1).

https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.13862

Van Oord, L. (2005). Culture as a configuration of learning: Hypotheses in the context of

international education. *Journal of Research in International Education*, *4*(2), 173–191.

https://doi.org/10.1177/1475240905054389

Van Oord, L. (2008). After culture: Intergroup encounters in education. *Journal of Research in

International Education*, *7*(2), 131–147. https://doi.org/10.1177/1475240908091301

van Rens, M., Haelermans, C., Groot, W., & van den Brink, H. M. (2019). Girls' and Boys'

Perceptions of the Transition from Primary to Secondary School. *Child Indicators Research*, *12*(4),

1481–1506. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12187-018-9591-y

Wachs, K., & Cordova, J. V. (2007). Mindful Relating: Exploring Mindfulness and Emotion

Repertoires in Intimate Relationships. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, *33*(4), 464–481.

https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1752-0606.2007.00032.x

Walker, K. A., & Koralesky, K. E. (2021). Student and instructor perceptions of engagement after

the rapid online transition of teaching due to COVID‑19. *Natural Sciences Education*, *50*(1).

https://doi.org/10.1002/nse2.20038

Wells, R. E., Grazzi, L., Schlosser, K., Pandey, R., & Kumari, V. (2021). Online Mindfulness May

Improve Mental Health During COVID-19 Pandemic. *Global Advances in Health and Medicine*.

Wenxi Wu, & Koh, A. (2022). Being "international" differently: A comparative study of transnational

approaches to international schooling in China. Educational Review, 74(1), 57–75.

https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2021.1887819

Wielgosz, J., Kral, T. R. A., Perlman, D. M., Mumford, J. A., Wager, T. D., Lutz, A., & Davidson, R.

J. (2022). Neural Signatures of Pain Modulation in Short-Term and Long-Term Mindfulness

Training: A Randomized Active-Control Trial. *American Journal of Psychiatry*, *179*(10), 758–767.

https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.ajp.21020145

Wilde, S., Sonley, A., Crane, C., Ford, T., Raja, A., Robson, J., Taylor, L., & Kuyken, W. (2019a).

Mindfulness Training in UK Secondary Schools: a Multiple Case Study Approach to Identification

of Cornerstones of Implementation. *Mindfulness*, *10*(2), 376–389.

https://doi.org/10.1007/s12671-018-0982-4

Wilde, S., Sonley, A., Crane, C., Ford, T., Raja, A., Robson, J., Taylor, L., & Kuyken, W. (2019b).

Mindfulness Training in UK Secondary Schools: a Multiple Case Study Approach to Identification

of Cornerstones of Implementation. *Mindfulness*, *10*(2), 376–389.

https://doi.org/10.1007/s12671-018-0982-4

Wiles, R. (2013). *What are qualitative research ethics?* Bloomsbury.

Williams, J. M. G., & Penman, D. (2012). *Mindfulness: a practical guide to finding peace in a frantic world* (Repr.). Piatkus.

Witarto, B. S., Visuddho, V., Witarto, A. P., Bestari, D., Sawitri, B., Melapi, T. A. S., & Wungu, C. D. K. (2022). Effectiveness of online mindfulness-based interventions in improving mental health

during the COVID-19 pandemic: A systematic review and meta-analysis of randomized controlled

trials. *PLOS ONE*, *17*(9), e0274177. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0274177

Wright, E., Ma, Y., & Auld, E. (2022). Experiments in being global: The cosmopolitan nationalism of

international schooling in China. Globalisation, Societies and Education, 20(2), 236–249.

https://doi.org/10.1080/14767724.2021.1882293

Wu, I. H. C., & Buchanan, N. T. (2019). Pathways to Vitality: the Role of Mindfulness and Coping.

Mindfulness, *10*(3), 481–491. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12671-018-0989-x

Xu, Q., & Jin, S. (2022). Cultural integration, subjective identity, and well-being: Global migrants in

the UK. *Current Psychology.* https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-021-01529-3

Yin, R. K. (2003). *Applications of case study research* (2nd ed). Sage Publications.

Yin, R. K. (2018). *Case study research and applications: design and methods* (Sixth edition). SAGE.

Young, N. A. E. (2023). Chinese citizen or global citizen? Nationalism and cosmopolitanism at an international school in Beijing. Chinese Education & Society, 56(2), 102–124. https://doi.org/10.1080/10611932.2023.2251834

Young Minds. (2020). Coronavirus: Impact on young people with mental health needs. *Young Minds*.

youngminds-coronavirus-report-march2020.pdf. (n.d.).

Zainuddin, Z., Habibah, N., Shaarani, Z., & Keong, Y. C. (n.d.). Educational technology adoption: A systematic review. *Education and Information Technologies.* https://doi.org/10.1007/s10639-021-10518-1

Zhang, D., & Shen, J. (2023). Dispositional mindfulness and mental health among Chinese college students during the COVID-19 lockdown: The mediating role of self-compassion and the moderating role of gender. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *13*, 1072548. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.1072548

Zhu, J. L., Schülke, R., Vatansever, D., Xi, D., Yan, J., Zhao, H., Xie, X., Feng, J., Chen, M. Y., Sahakian, B. J., & Wang, S. (2021). Mindfulness practice for protecting mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Translational Psychiatry*, *11*(1), 329. https://doi.org/10.1038/s41398-021-01459-8