

Teacher opinions about MindUP curriculum¹

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ABSTRACT

In this study, it is aimed to examine the changes that the MindUP curriculum creates on the behaviors of 3rd grade primary school students, which are thought to help them improve mental fitness, from the teacher's perspective. In order to examine the changes created by the curriculum on student behavior, it was deemed appropriate to design this research in the case study model, which is one of the qualitative research methods. The study group of the research consists of 3rd grade students studying at a public school in the central district of Samsun province in the spring semester of the 2021-2022 academic year. The program was applied to all students in a class in order to use a total of 15 lessons in the "MindUP Curriculum" book as a classroom development model. In this regard, the study was completed with a total of 26 students aged between 8 and 9. In this study, where the case study model was used, the data were obtained through easily accessible case sampling and a semi-structured interview form from a classroom teacher working in a primary school affiliated with the Ministry of National Education. The data collection process in the study took a total of 8 weeks. Content analysis technique was used to analyze and evaluate the verbal data obtained. As a result of the analysis, the data was categorized into themes and sub-themes. As a result of the research, it was seen that the MindUP curriculum had positive effects on children's attention, focus, communication with other individuals, helpfulness and self-regulation behaviors. It is also among the results of the research that it contributes to children's multifaceted awareness such as creativity, discovery (curiosity), cooperation, empathy and socialization. It is among the opinions expressed by the teacher that the MindUP curriculum is applicable in terms of contributing to children's awareness, but that the same program will be more effective when applied to 4th and 5th grade students.

KEYWORDS

Conscious awareness, primary school, teacher opinion, MindUP.

MindUP öğretim programı hakkında öğretmen görüşleri

ÖZET

Bu çalışmada MindUP öğretim programının ilkökul 3. sınıf öğrencilerinin zihinsel zindeliği geliştirmelerine yardımcı olabileceği düşünülen davranışları üzerinde oluşturduğu değişikliklerin öğretmen gözünden incelenmesi amaçlanmıştır. Öğretim programının öğrenci davranışları üzerinde oluşturduğu değişiklikleri incelemek amacıyla bu araştırmanın nitel araştırma yöntemlerinden olan durum çalışması modelinde desenlenmesi uygun görülmüştür. Araştırmanın çalışma grubunu 2021-2022 eğitim öğretim yılının bahar döneminde Samsun ili merkez ilçesinde bulunan bir devlet okulunda öğrenim görmekte olan 3. sınıf öğrencileri oluşturmaktadır. "MindUP Öğretim Programı" kitabındaki toplam 15 dersin sınıf geliştirme modeli olarak kullanılması amacıyla program bir sınıf kapsamındaki bütün öğrencilere uygulanmıştır. Bu doğrultuda yaşları 8 ila 9 arasında değişen toplam 26 kişilik bir öğrenci grubu ile çalışma tamamlanmıştır. Durum çalışması modelinin kullanıldığı bu çalışmada veriler, kolay ulaşılabilir durum örnekleme yolu ile Milli Eğitim Bakanlığına bağlı bir ilkökulda görev yapmakta olan sınıf

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öğretmeninden yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme formu yoluyla elde edilmiştir. Araştırmada verilerin toplanma süreci toplam 8 hafta sürmüştür. Elde edilen sözel verileri çözümlmek ve değerlendirmek için içerik analizi tekniği kullanılmıştır. Veriler, analiz sonucunda tema ve alt temalara ayrılarak kategorize edilmiştir. Araştırma sonucunda uygulanan MindUP öğretim programının çocukların dikkat, odaklanma, başka bireylerle olan iletişim, yardımseverlik, öz düzenleme davranışları üzerinde olumlu etkileri olduğu görülmüştür. Ayrıca yaratıcılık, keşif yapma (merak), işbirliği, empati ve sosyalleşme gibi çocukların çok yönlü farkındalıklarına da katkı sağladığı araştırmanın sonuçları arasındadır. MindUP öğretim programının çocukların farkındalıklarına katkı sağlaması açısından uygulanabilir olduğu fakat aynı programın 4. ve 5. Sınıf öğrencilerine uygulandığında daha çok verim alınacağı öğretmen tarafından bildirilen görüşler arasındadır.

ANAHTAR KELİMELEER

Bilinçli farkındalık, ilkokul, öğretmen görüşü, MindUP.

Introduction

Approximately one in every five school-age children struggles with learning or attention problems such as behavioral, social, emotional difficulties and academic failure. It is thought that most of these learning and attention problems are caused by difficulties in children's self-regulation skills (Blair & Diamond, 2008; McClelland & Cameron, 2011). Children whose self-regulation skills are not sufficiently developed face difficulties in paying attention to what is taught and experienced, maintaining control over negative behaviors, and completing assigned tasks with focus (McClelland & Cameron, 2011). These difficulties experienced by children may cause decreases in academic performance, maladaptive behaviors in the classroom environment, and may also lead to serious problems in their ability to keep up with real life (Bronson, 2000; Valiente et al., 2008). Due to the prevalence of children facing such problems, it is considered important to determine the effectiveness of practices aimed at developing self-regulation skills, enabling them to apply these skills to real life when necessary, and improving and regulating behaviors in the classroom. One of the most promising of these applications includes mindfulness-based interventions developed for use in schools (Hai et al., 2021).

It seems possible to improve students' social and emotional well-being with awareness-based interventions (Durlak et al., 2011; Sklad et al., 2012). Social and emotional programs, which are increasingly being implemented in schools, now function as an important part of education (Greenberg et al., 2017). In addition, the development of awareness-based intervention programs is popular as one of the steps taken in education in terms of improving the welfare level of children (Semple et al., 2017). There is a general understanding adopted in the 21st century that children should be taught social-emotional skills and be able to apply them when needed in order to be successful not only academically but also in general (Crooks et al., 2020). Awareness-based interventions basically aim to help children regulate their emotions, establish healthy relationships with other individuals, and develop feelings such as compassion and empathy, kindness and altruism (de Carvalho et al., 2017). Some studies have shown that mindfulness-based interventions cause a significant decrease in people's stress levels (Barnes et al., 2007; Carlson et al., 2001; Craigie et al., 2008). Based on the information provided, it is thought that by minimizing the stress on children with awareness-based interventions and improving their self-regulation skills, children can become more successful individuals both academically and in their out-of-school lives by ensuring mental fitness. In addition, considering the general stress experienced by children as well as the stress and hopelessness caused by the ongoing COVID-19 epidemic process, it is thought that the importance of awareness-based interventions will increase even more in this period. Considering the problems that stress creates on children, such as the inability to establish healthy friendships with friends, decreases in school success, decrease in self-confidence, and lack of interest in social activities (Engin et al., 2013), it is thought that the necessity of awareness training is inevitable in terms of children's general success and happiness.

Individuals are born with the ability to understand and comprehend conscious awareness from the moment they are born. However, what is important is in which areas of their lives they can turn this innate talent into a skill and apply it (Brown, 2003). The most important thing is to ensure that children's innate awareness and desire to live in the moment and be in the present can continue. In order to achieve this situation, children must first be able to comprehend with mental clarity, then develop it, and finally strive to make this success sustainable. Therefore, mindfulness training for children has an important place in transferring and applying the above-mentioned basic human skills to life and thus shedding light and enlightening children whenever they need it in their lives (Snel, 2016).

It will be of great help to children if they know awareness skills and apply them when necessary, before they get caught up in the stress of life, before they encounter family or environmental problems, in short, before they encounter the general difficulties of life. It cannot be predicted years in advance how difficult living conditions await children years later and to what extent the stress they will experience will negatively affect both their brain and life activities. However, thanks to awareness training, it is possible for them to be able to make sense of emotions, thoughts and experiences, to realize them, to maintain their awareness by paying attention, to accept both themselves and others as they are and to establish healthy relationships accordingly (Maloney et al., 2016).

One of the most promising awareness programs applied to students in schools is the "MindUP" curriculum developed by the Hawn Foundation (2011). "Designed to be implemented by teachers in classrooms, the "MindUP Curriculum: Grades 3-5: Brain-Focused Strategies for Learning and Living" curriculum aims to help children transfer their awareness to their lives when necessary and discover themselves through activities.

The main purpose of this research is to examine the changes that the MindUP curriculum creates on the behaviors of 3rd grade primary school students, which are thought to help them develop mental fitness, in line with the teacher's opinion. In line with this main purpose of the research, answers were sought to three questions:

1. What are the changes that the MindUP curriculum, which was prepared in accordance with the development of third grade students, creates on children's attention, stress, focus, communication and helpfulness with other individuals, self-acceptance and self-worth, self-regulation and self-controlled behavior, based on the teacher's opinion?
2. What are the versatile awarenesses that the MindUP curriculum creates on students based on the teacher's opinion?
3. Based on teacher opinions, what are the opinions about the effectiveness of the MindUP curriculum, which is an awareness-based intervention approach?

The needs of institutions, teachers and students that are a part of the education system for new and different alternative approaches, supporting students' cognitive, moral, social-emotional development, awareness of their values, etc. Considering the goals, the importance given to conscious awareness training continues to increase. This study aimed to examine the impact of the MindUP curriculum, which is one of the promising awareness trainings implemented in schools and developed by the Hawn Foundation (2011), on children, based on teachers' opinions. The program has been implemented in many schools around the world and has been shown to contribute to children's mental health, social relationships and academic success (Barker & Banks, 2016; Hai et al., 2021; Perry-Parrish et al., 2016). It is thought that the fact that the activities and lessons in the MindUP Curriculum have not been implemented in Turkey yet and therefore are not subject to national literature will reveal the importance of this research as it is the first. However, it is considered important to determine the effectiveness of the research, especially during this period, in order to help children develop the ability to manage the increasing stress factors caused by the ongoing COVID-19 epidemic process. Helping children learn to correct both the way their brains work and their own emotions and thoughts, in order to create a road plan that leads to a positive way of thinking by getting rid of mental despair, is

considered very important for them to be successful individuals in their daily lives as well as in their academic life. It is thought that by implementing the MindUP curriculum, which has already been planned, accepted and its benefits have been found in the international literature, for the first time in Turkey, the observations and opinions that emerge as a result of observing the effects of the courses and activities within the program on the students will guide other educators.

Method

In this part of the study, information about the research model, study group, data collection tools and data analysis sections are included. In this study, ethics committee permission was obtained from Ordu University Social and Human Sciences Research Ethics Committee within the scope of research and publication ethics with the decision number 2021-249 dated 27 December 2021.

Research Model

A qualitative research approach was adopted in this study. Qualitative research approaches are research methods that provide flexibility to the researcher in shaping the process and use data collection techniques such as observation, interview, audio and visual document analysis (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018).

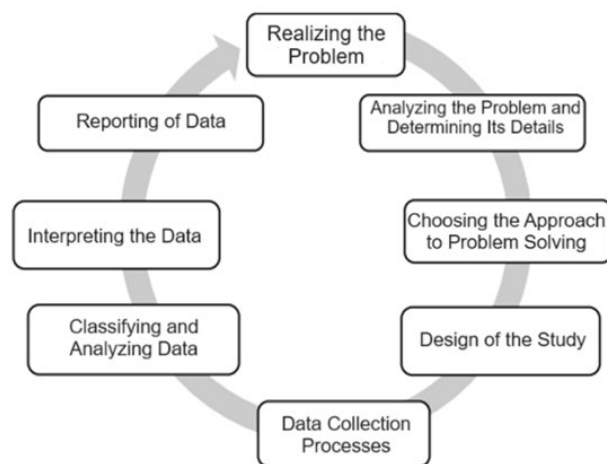


Figure 1 Qualitative research process

The qualitative research process outlined by Creswell (2002) includes three main factors (Figure 1). The first and most important thing is to create a detailed theoretical framework representing the subject of study. Then, a plan should be developed that can be implemented gradually and may vary in terms of time and financial resources. The last and third step is to report the study in an understandable, clear and fluent language that the reader can easily understand (Bengtsson, 2016; Creswell, 2002; Merriam and Grenier, 2019). In this research, three main factors were tried to be strategically applied, taking into account the qualitative research process put forward by Creswell.

The research was designed in the case study model, which is one of the qualitative research methods. A case study consists of a detailed examination of a subject, a special event or any environment (Paker, 2015). What is described as a "situation" here may be a person or a community, or it may be an event or the implementation of a certain program (Creswell, 2007). The subject of this research is the MindUP curriculum. In this study, it was deemed appropriate to use the case study method in order to examine in depth the changes in children's behavior

after the implementation of the MindUP program from the teacher's perspective. The status of the study is "Implementation of the MindUP curriculum".

Working Group

The study group of the research was selected from 3rd grade students studying at a public school in Samsun in the 2021-2022 academic year. The 15 lessons in the "MindUP Curriculum" book prepared by the Hawn Foundation for grades 3 and 5 were applied to all students in a class as a class development model and to be implemented within a specific program. In this context, the research was completed with a total of 26 students, 12 girls and 14 boys between the ages of 8-9.

Data Collection Tool

In this research, interview technique was used as a data collection tool. The interview technique used in qualitative research is one of the non-standardized data collection tools (Özer, 2003). The interview technique, which is the most commonly used technique in qualitative research, is very powerful in terms of clearly expressing people's feelings, experiences and opinions. In addition, since the interview technique is based on speech, which is the most common form of communication, it helps individuals express their thoughts easily (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016). In this context, in the research conducted, it was deemed appropriate to use the Classroom Teacher Opinion Form in order to determine the classroom teacher's opinions about the application in detail. In the research, semi-structured interview, one of the interview techniques, was preferred and accordingly, the form was prepared by the researcher through a series of three steps. The stages in preparing the form are explained below.

1. Firstly, the theoretical basis of the teacher opinion form was established and, accordingly, a field survey was conducted using similar studies. At this stage; Schonert-Reichl et al. (2015), Schonert-Reichl and Lawlor (2010), Carvalho et al. (2017), Perry-Parrish (2016), Crooks et al. (2020), Thierry et al. (2016) studies were used.
2. Semi-structured interview was preferred among the interview types in the research. This interview was preferred because it requires clearly determining the teacher's views and examining the teacher's thoughts in order to better understand these views.
3. As the third stage in the preparation of the form, interview questions were prepared. In the light of the information obtained up to this stage in the preparation of the questions, the questions were arranged by taking the opinions of the researcher, two classroom teachers and three field experts, and the form was given its final form.

Necessary permissions were obtained from the relevant class teacher for the data collection, the families of the students who volunteered and gave permission were asked to sign the "Informed consent/assent form", and research and publication ethics were followed throughout the research process.

Analysis of Data

In this study, the data obtained with the semi-structured interview form was analyzed using the content analysis method. The main purpose of content analysis is to present the data collected from the research by going through detailed processes, organizing it within a certain framework and interpreting it objectively in a way that the reader can easily understand (Koçak & Arun, 2006). In this study, the data were categorized by creating themes and sub-themes as a result of the analysis. The data was first coded, and the codes obtained from the raw data were divided into sections in line with their common characteristics and themes and sub-themes were determined.

Findings

In this part of the research, the data obtained after the MindUP curriculum applied to 3rd grade primary school students, in line with the opinions of the classroom teacher, was content analyzed and presented in tables. Direct teacher opinions regarding the sub-themes presented under each table are included. Data obtained in line with the teacher's opinions; It is divided into themes such as focus, internal experience, cognitive experience and social experience. Focus theme; It is divided into three sub-themes: how our brain works, mindful awareness and focused awareness. Inner experience theme; It is divided into six sub-themes: careful listening, careful seeing, careful smelling, careful tasting, careful movement I and careful movement II. Cognitive experience theme; three sub-themes: gaining perspective, choosing optimism, and appreciating happy experiences; The theme of social experience is; It is divided into three sub-themes: expressing gratitude, doing good, and moving mindfully in the world. Each theme and sub-themes are presented in the tables below, categorized as changes observed in the process, difficulties and limitations experienced in the process, in line with the opinions obtained from the classroom teacher.

Themes and Sub-Themes Obtained According to Teachers' Opinions: Focus

Three sub-themes created for the "Focus" theme of the research in line with the data obtained from the teachers' opinions were categorized as the changes observed in the process and the difficulties and limitations experienced in the process (Table 1).

Table 1 Sub-themes of the "Focus" theme, changes observed in the process, and difficulties and limitations experienced in the process, in line with teacher opinions and researcher observations.

Subtheme	Opinions Gathered from the Teacher	
	Changes Observed in the Process	Difficulties and Limitations Encountered in the Process
How Does Our Brain Work?	Visual memory development Development of creativity Awareness of brain functions	Lack of fundamental knowledge High-level course content
Mindful Awareness	Increased participation in class Stress control Increase in attention Development of environmental awareness	Insufficient time
Focused Awareness	Breath control Body awareness	Open space requirement (due to COVID-19 epidemic process measures)

After the implementation of the activities suggested in the "MindUP Curriculum" book in the classroom, the first lesson "How Does Our Brain Work?" The classroom teacher's opinions about the course are given below, in line with the semi-structured interview form on the subject:

"I noticed that the students had difficulty in understanding the subject at first, because they did not have prior knowledge about the brain and I think due to their age. However, as they saw the parts and locations of the brain thanks to the brain visual we brought to the class, I witnessed them talking among themselves like "your amygdala is here, look." Later, when he started giving examples from daily life, the subject began to attract the children's attention even more. For example, after the example of running away from the dog and wanting to hit our friend when we got angry, some students talked about similar memories they had. As the examples increased and they listened to each other, they began to enjoy sharing facts about their brains. Sharing the memories they experienced and the scenarios they created helped them learn the functions of the parts of their brains by connecting with them and understand how important an organ their brains are. When I asked the children to draw pictures about the brain, they liked the idea because I think, due to their age, they like to express the things they have learned by drawing pictures rather than expressing them verbally. The fact that they looked at their friends' drawings with curiosity while drawing and tried to explain what they drew to each other made this topic even more fun. Almost every

day, during one of the last lessons, I would ask students to turn on music and sometimes dance to relax. Since the MindUP curriculum book suggests combining students with different fields such as mathematics and music in order to reinforce what they have learned, when I asked the students to write songs about the brain that day, they were excited about the idea of sharing what they knew as a song. Thanks to the fun activities, children understood that their brain is an important organ, became aware of the functions of important regions in the brain, and began to communicate with each other and pronounce the words they heard for the first time among themselves. In fact, when a student's mother was angry with him when they went home, the student's response to his mother was, "Mom, your amygdala seems to be working too hard, too." This shows that the subject really caught the attention of the children and that they reflected it in daily life in this way. "I also think that the activities within the scope of this course (making songs about the brain, drawing pictures) contribute to children's creativity."

Following the implementation of the activities suggested in the "MindUP Curriculum" book in the classroom environment, the classroom teacher's opinions about the course, based on the semi-structured interview form regarding the second lesson, "Mindful Awareness", are given below:

"I think the activities in the mindfulness course are more appropriate to the age of the students. They had no difficulty in understanding, and even participated in the lesson by giving very different examples to the examples in the activity sheet provided. Some students have heard about the method of counting from 1 to 10, especially when they are angry, by their families and stated that they sometimes apply it, but most of my students learned it new and it attracted their attention. Similarly, listening carefully to the sounds around them in times of anxiety and knowing that this method would relax them also attracted their attention. Thanks to these lessons and activities, students had the opportunity to add to their knowledge about being careful and being careless. I think these activities contribute greatly to students' awareness of their environment. For example, during break time, a student of mine asked, "Teacher, did you hear the voice?" asked. When I asked what the sound was, he replied, "So you didn't pay attention, teacher, I heard the sound of the fire department." This shows that the activities can be used by students outside of class and help raise awareness in students about attention. "Only the limited time caused us to do the activities a little quickly and consecutively."

Following the implementation of the activities suggested in the "MindUP Curriculum" book in the classroom environment, the classroom teacher's opinions about the course are given below, in line with the semi-structured interview form regarding the 3rd lesson, "Focused Awareness: Basic Application".

"The mindful breathing exercise, which is similar to the counting from 1 to 10 or careful listening exercises we showed in the previous lesson to relax our minds, was also an activity appropriate for the age of the students. In this way, the students both had fun and realized the importance of breathing by focusing on our breath and body, rather than ordinary breathing by thinking about other things to relax. In this way, they learned another activity that relaxes their minds that they can easily apply in their daily lives. They also became aware of how they did this by focusing only on their breathing and observing the change and relaxation in their bodies. However, due to the Covid-19 epidemic process, we had to do the breathing activity within the scope of this course outdoors outside the classroom."

Themes and Sub-Themes Obtained According to Teachers' Opinions: Inner Experience

In line with the data obtained from the teachers' opinions, the six subthemes created for the "Inner Experience" theme of the study were categorized as changes observed in the process, difficulties and limitations experienced in the process (Table 2).

Table 2 Sub-themes of the "Inner Experience" theme, changes observed in the process, and difficulties and limitations experienced in the process, in line with teachers' opinions

Subtheme	Opinions Gathered from the Teacher
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	Changes Observed in the Process	Difficulties Encountered in the Process and Their Limitations
Careful Listening	Voice awareness Self control Communication with other individuals	Failure to achieve absolute silence
Mindful Seeing	Curiosity (making exploration) Vision awareness Cooperation	
Mindful Olfaction	Smell awareness Focusing	
Mindful Tasting	Taste awareness Nutrition control	
Careful Movement I	Body awareness (post-activity sweating, facial flushing, palpitations, fatigue) Understanding the relationship between pulse and breathing rate Curiosity (exploring)	Students sweating after activities requiring movement
Careful Movement II	Stability control Awareness of arm and leg movements (during walking activity) Physical response control	Open space requirement

Following the implementation of the activities suggested in the "MindUP Curriculum" book in the classroom environment, the classroom teacher's opinions about the lesson on the subject of "Careful Listening", which is the 4th lesson, are given below:

"I can say that careful listening activities actually include the games I have played with my students so far. Adjusting their voices when I open and close my arms, or a game similar to the ear to ear game, are games that all students know and enjoy playing. However, learning these things in conjunction with their brains made them aware of what they could do on their own. I think that the activities within this course, such as the ability to adjust their own voices, have positive effects on students' self-controlled behavior. I also think that careful communication and learning through play that there are different ways to express the same idea will benefit their communication with each other. In primary schools, when a teacher says something, they immediately ask, "Is this how we are going to do it, teacher?" There are many who say. But now, when I say something, "Teacher, I listened carefully, you said so." "Their words increased."

Following the implementation of the activities suggested in the "MindUP Curriculum" book in the classroom environment, the classroom teacher's opinions about the lesson, based on the semi-structured interview form regarding the 5th lesson, "Mindful Seeing", are given below:

"The children had a lot of fun doing the activities in the careful vision lesson. First, putting students in the role of scientists in the laboratory helped them learn real-world relevance for attentive vision. When I distributed the objects (leaves and stones), they first got excited and curious, and after I made the explanations, the quest to discover something new motivated them even more and made them look more carefully, looking for different features in the objects I distributed. Careful viewing activities generally enabled children to look more closely and carefully. Making arrangements for their friends' events and seeing what their friends did not see made them proud. They liked seeing details that they did not notice at first glance or that only they noticed, and they constantly felt the need to point them out to me. "He taught students that careful work can be improved by collaboration, sharing new ways of seeing with peers, looking closely more than once, and reviewing drawings they have recorded."

Following the implementation of the activities suggested in the "MindUP Curriculum" book in the classroom environment, the classroom teacher's opinions about the lesson on the 6th lesson, "Mindful Olfaction", are given below, in line with the semi-structured interview form.

"The activities within the scope of the careful smelling lesson, similar to the attentional listening lesson, enabled the students to focus on a single sense, notice the smells around them, analyze them, and express these smells with the adjectives they use (smelling like rotten, fishy, moldy). While trying to distinguish the smells, they focused only on that object and were as quiet as possible. "In addition, they learned that smells create signals in the brain, and that some smells even trigger the secretion of the dopamine hormone and thus make us feel good, enabling them to establish a connection between smell and the brain."

Following the implementation of the activities suggested in the "MindUP Curriculum" book in the classroom environment, the classroom teacher's opinions about the lesson based on the semi-structured interview form regarding the 7th lesson, "Mindful Tasting", are given below:

"Mindful tasting activities, such as careful seeing and smelling, also gave children the opportunity to both relax and be aware. With the curiosity and participation of the children, they shared unexpected things about the food that they had not noticed before, and they gradually became aware of the flavors by focusing on their taste. Careful tasting activities both increased children's tasting experiences and increased their awareness of tastes. Mindful tasting can also have major impacts on students' health when practiced regularly. "Not only does it provide benefits such as focus, but it can also help students understand how well they digest their meals and feel full, which can prevent them from overeating."

Following the implementation of the activities suggested in the "MindUP Curriculum" book in the classroom environment, the classroom teacher's opinions about the course, based on the semi-structured interview form regarding the 8th lesson, "Careful Movement I", are given below:

"The students loved the mindful movement class because they both moved and noticed the changes in their bodies. Especially the methods of finding heartbeats were interesting to them, they wanted to find them constantly. They even tried to find out again and again, first by trying one method and then the other, wondering if there were any differences. When they saw the difference between the numbers they found in their heartbeats, first when they were calm and then when they were moving, they felt proud of their attitude of reaching a scientific conclusion. I can say that the fact that their parents said that they would measure their pulses when they went home, and that they even measured them, noted them down and brought me the results the next day, shows how much they enjoyed this lesson and that their awareness of this subject has now increased."

Following the implementation of the activities suggested in the "MindUP Curriculum" book in the classroom environment, the classroom teacher's opinions about the course, based on the semi-structured interview form regarding the 9th lesson, "Careful Movement II", are given below:

"In this lesson, students learned information about acting carefully, similar to the activities they saw in the previous lesson, by doing and experiencing. The students had a lot of fun because all the activities in this course required movement. At the same time, while having fun, they learned about their brains in accordance with their age, that their brains manage the movements in their bodies, and that the mind and body actually move together. In this way, they understood the ways and importance of developing a positive mind. I think this will be useful for students to establish healthy relationships. Activities such as mindful walking helped students focus on their immediate physical experience. In this way, I think it will reduce the distress of students in situations such as walking and waiting in the canteen line. Balancing exercises do not require preparation. Thus, students can easily apply such simple exercises at any time of their lives. I think mindful walking is both an easy and beneficial exercise that combines awareness with movement. Students were excited while doing the exercises in this lesson and encouraged each other to do the exercises. "Children learned that they could both carefully observe the changes in their bodies and that controlling their physical reactions was actually possible with simple exercises."

Themes and Sub-Themes Obtained According to Teachers' Opinions: Cognitive Experience

In line with the data obtained from the teachers' opinions, the three subthemes created for the "Cognitive Experience" theme of the study were categorized as changes observed in the process, difficulties experienced in the process and limitations (Table 3).

Table 3 Sub-themes of the "Cognitive Experience" theme, changes observed in the process, and difficulties and limitations experienced in the process, in line with teachers' opinions

Subtheme	Opinions Gathered from the Teacher	
	Changes Observed in the Process	Difficulties and Limitations Encountered in the Process
Getting Perspective	Group work (cooperation) Socialization Empathy Perspective taking (taking a point of view)	Includes activities that require long periods of time
Choosing Optimism	Awareness of optimistic and pessimistic thinking	
Appreciating Experiences	Happy Creativity Awareness of being happy and making happy	

Following the implementation of the activities suggested in the "MindUP Curriculum" book in the classroom environment, the classroom teacher's opinions about the course, based on the semi-structured interview form regarding the 10th lesson, "Getting Perspective", are given below:

"I think developing the ability to handle a situation in more than one way has social benefits, such as reducing conflicts between students and making group work easier. By gaining different perspectives, students can accurately interpret the behavior of people around them and thus measure their own behavior and reactions. Activities carried out within the scope of gaining perspective, such as each student completing a story in a different way, choosing a role for themselves in the story and continuing that role by imagining it differently, help students develop empathy and thus establish healthier communication with their environment."

Following the implementation of the activities suggested in the "MindUP Curriculum" book in the classroom environment, the classroom teacher's opinions about the course, based on the semi-structured interview form regarding the 11th lesson, "Choosing Optimism", are given below:

"Thinking optimistically and pessimistically is very important for students' personal development. It was interesting for them that it was possible to think optimistically even when a negative situation occurred, that optimistic or pessimistic thinking was a situation that affected their own health and success, and that they tried to understand this by relating it to real examples of problems they experienced and shared them with each other. "I think students understand the importance of thinking optimistically to help lift their spirits when they are stressed or feeling down."

Following the implementation of the activities suggested in the "MindUP Curriculum" book in the classroom environment, the classroom teacher's opinions about the course, based on the semi-structured interview form regarding the 12th lesson, "Appreciating Happy Experiences", are given below:

"This lesson really helped the children recall happy memories. They wanted to share those memories with their friends, and while sharing, they were excited and happy as if they were living that moment. So they really realized that just remembering happy memories made them happy. When I asked them to create a mini movie thinking about the memories, some of the children even gave names to those movies. They shared posts using their creativity, such as "Teacher, the name of my comedy movie is a beautiful day with my friend Akin." Some of the students even wrote names for their movies when I asked them to draw a

section from these movies. "I think the activities within this course make children really happy and contribute to their creativity."

Themes and Sub-Themes Obtained According to Teachers' Opinions: Social Experience

Based on the data obtained from the teachers' opinions, the three subthemes created for the "Social Experience" theme of the study were categorized as changes observed in the process, difficulties experienced in the process and limitations (Table 4).

Table 4 Sub-themes of the "Cognitive Experience" theme, changes observed in the process, and difficulties and limitations experienced in the process, in line with teachers' opinions

Subtheme	Opinions Gathered from the Teacher	
	Changes Observed in the Process	Difficulties and Limitations Encountered in the Process
Expressing Gratefulness	Establishing a relationship of gratitude and thanking Communication and helpfulness with other individuals	
Doing Good	Kindness and helpfulness to other individuals Realizing that good deeds can be done without requiring any effort.	Female students are more active in the activities in this course.
Moving Mindfully in the World	Helpfulness Cooperation Reflecting positive emotions Becoming aware of people who need help and situations that require help Awareness of responsibility	

Following the implementation of the activities suggested in the "MindUP Curriculum" book in the classroom environment, the classroom teacher's opinions about the course, based on the semi-structured interview form regarding the 13th lesson, "Expressing Gratefulness", are given below:

"Within this course, students first learned what gratitude is. Because this concept was not a concept they had heard before. They saw that there are different ways to show gratitude, such as saying thank you, receiving a gift, or giving a compliment. They learned that every behavior from the other person that makes us happy creates a feeling of gratitude. They identified people or situations in their lives for which they were grateful and thought about why they were grateful. Thanks to the activities within this lesson, children remembered the important things, big and small, that made them happy to be alive. They learned the importance of gratitude by learning that expressing gratitude makes the other person relaxed and happy."

Following the implementation of the activities suggested in the "MindUP Curriculum" book in the classroom environment, the classroom teacher's opinions about the lesson on the 14th lesson, "Doing Good", based on the semi-structured interview form, are given below:

"Doing good was a great lesson for my students. My female students, in particular, were more active in this regard and wanted to share their ideas by participating in the lesson more. I think this course increased students' awareness. Because when it comes to doing good, the first thing that comes to mind is examples that require great effort. But when they learned that every action that makes the other person happy is doing good, they realized how many good deeds they actually did during the day."

Following the implementation of the activities suggested in the "MindUP Curriculum" book in the classroom environment, the classroom teacher's opinions about the course, based on the semi-structured interview form regarding the 15th lesson, "Moving Mindfully in the World", are given below:

"I think this course contributed significantly to increasing the awareness of my students. Students developed various help ideas for people in difficult situations around them, and were able to talk about the difficulties and feelings of these people. Thanks to the aid provided to the village school, they enjoyed helping not only the people around them or the people they knew, but also someone they did not know. They had a say in every step of this event, they embraced the task and tried every day to protect the materials collected for the children in the village school from being damaged. For this task, the students acted together, a plan was made and executed together. This gave them guidance on how to behave in group work."

Discussion and Conclusion

In this part of the research, results and discussions based on the findings are included. Discussion and interpretation of the results were made in accordance with the order of the research questions. Since the "MindUP Curriculum" has not yet been implemented in Turkey, the results of this research are presented by comparing them with studies conducted in other countries.

According to the results of the first research question prepared in a semi-structured interview form and presented to the classroom teacher, it was seen that the MindUP curriculum, which was prepared according to the development of 3rd grade students, had positive effects on children's attention, focus, communication with other individuals, helpfulness and self-regulation behaviors.

According to the results of the second research question, which was prepared in a semi-structured interview form and presented to the classroom teacher, the classroom teacher reported the versatile awareness created by the MindUP curriculum, which was prepared according to the development of 3rd grade students, as creativity, discovery (curiosity), cooperation, empathy and socialization.

According to the results of the third research question prepared in a semi-structured interview form and presented to the classroom teacher, the classroom teacher regarding the effectiveness of the MindUP curriculum, which was prepared according to the development of 3rd grade students, said "the activities are fun and enjoyable", "it can be applied to third grade students in order to contribute to the students' awareness, but the same lessons can be applied to third grade students." "I think that more efficiency will be achieved when the activities are applied to 4th and 5th grades." Other research results parallel to the results of this research are given below.

In a study conducted in Canada with the aim of supporting cognitive and social-emotional development with 4th and 5th grade students consisting of a total of 99 students selected from four schools, with one class participating in each school, the students were divided into two groups and one group of students was given a control course, while the other group students were given MindUP. program was implemented (Schonert-Reichl et al., 2015). According to the results of the study, the MindUP program increased optimism, improved emotional self-regulation, and had positive effects on helpfulness compared to the control course. As a result of the research conducted with eleven 5th grade students to examine whether the MindUP curriculum could effectively improve the classroom behavior of students with behavioral difficulties, it was observed that there was an increase in the students' focus, attention and optimism levels after the intervention (Schonert-Reichl and Lawlor, 2010). In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the MindUP curriculum in Portugal, the result of the research in which a total of 454 3rd and 4th grade students and 20 teachers participated showed that there was an increase in the self-regulation skills of the students participating in the MindUP curriculum (Carvalho et al., 2017). Perry-Parrish (2016) supports the above results by stating that

mindfulness training reduces stress related to psychological and cognitive functionality, increases self-regulation, and improves emotional regulation.

In a study conducted with kindergarten children to determine the effects of the MindUP application on behavioral symptoms, executive functions and adaptation skills, the results of this study showed that children who received the intervention improved their adaptation skills and decreased their behavioral symptoms (Crooks et al., 2020). As a result of a study conducted with 285 children in a kindergarten in Canada to determine the changes caused by the MindUP application in the behavior of young children, it was observed that there were multifaceted positive changes such as a significant increase in children's resilience and a decrease in internalization behaviors after their participation in the MindUP program (Off, 2018). According to the opinion of the classroom teacher of the MindUP curriculum applied to 5th grade students, it was observed that there were improvements in the students' social skills and their aggressive behavior decreased (Schonert-Reichl & Lawlor, 2010). As a result of the research conducted with 3rd and 4th grade students in Portugal, teachers reported improvements in students' multifaceted awareness such as observation and self-compassion (Carvalho et al., 2017). According to the results of the study conducted on 4th and 5th grade students, the teachers reported an increase in empathy and social skills after the MindUP curriculum was applied (Schonert-Reichl et al., 2015). After the MindUP program applied to preschool students, students' improved executive functions and better language skills are among the versatile awareness gained by students (Thierry et al., 2016). Perry-Parrish (2016) states that mindfulness-based interventions have many promising aspects for the future of children and young people, and supports the results of this research and other research mentioned above.

The "intermediate" years (approximately ages 9 to 12) are defined as the phase in the lifespan when different demands and developmental challenges are experienced. For this reason, these ages, when events that have the potential to change emotions, behavior and cognition may occur, can be considered as high sensitivity and risk stages (Graber & Brooks-Gunn, 1996). These years are also characterized as ages when different mental health problems are experienced (Eccles & Roeser, 2011). In this context, transition periods covering intermediate years, such as early adolescence, can be considered as windows that provide the opportunity to develop positive changes in children's life cycles (Roeser & Zelazo, 2012). Therefore, preadolescence or early adolescence can be considered a particularly important time to implement mindfulness interventions to promote optimal cognitive function and maintain emotional and social competencies at an optimal level (Schonert-Reichl et al., 2013). It is possible to spend this period, in which social changes such as changes resulting from children's cognitive and emotional development, conflict between children and parents, and increased focus on the peer group, are experienced at an optimal level with the necessary awareness interventions (Eccles & Roeser, 2011). The ages of the participants are an area of concern for mindfulness training. According to Piaget's developmental stages, children between the ages of 6 and 8 are at the highest point of the preoperational period, where symbolic play accelerates. Although these ages are the basic developmental stages of children, they are not considered suitable for awareness training as they are too young to think logically. Therefore, MindUP activities such as discussing brain functions and exploring scenarios may require more developmentally advanced cognitive reasoning. Children between the ages of 6 and 8 may not have sufficient cognitive skills to fully understand and develop this level of awareness and reasoning (Barker and Banks, 2016). This situation partially supports the result of the third research question, since children between the ages of 8 and 9 participated in this study.

Foundation (2011) stated that teachers in other countries who implemented the MindUP curriculum had the following opinions and commented that the program was applicable for 3rd, 4th and 5th grades.

- It allows children to maintain focused attention.
- It helps them think more clearly, especially under pressure.

- Improves communication with other people.
- Improves the overall classroom environment by instilling hope and optimism.
- Helps create a more vibrant and strong school culture.
- It helps them feel happier, more joyful and grateful.

The positive opinions of teachers in other countries about the MindUP curriculum are similar to the results of this research, and the positive opinions of teachers in other countries are similar to the results of this study. Its suitability for grades differs partially in that it is seen as more suitable for 4th and 5th grades, as a result of this research.

Suggestions

The positive effects of the implemented MindUP curriculum on children's attention, focus, communication with other individuals, helpfulness and self-regulation behaviors; It is considered useful in terms of contributing to children's multifaceted awareness such as creativity, discovery (curiosity), cooperation, empathy and socialization. Based on the results of this research and other research conducted in the international literature, it is recommended to expand the implementation of the MindUP curriculum, which has not yet been implemented in Turkey.

The MindUP curriculum, which has three age-appropriate versions: K-2, 3-5 and 6-8, and was prepared to be developmentally appropriate for the target age groups, was used in this research for grades 3-5. The one for grades was applied to 3rd grade students. Based on the results of this study and teacher feedback, it seems more appropriate to make the same version for 4th and 5th grade students.

This study was applied to a single class of 26 students as a classroom development model, and the effectiveness of the program can be observed by increasing the number of classes and students for further research.

In the study, only teachers' opinions were taken, and parent opinions can be added to other similar studies to be conducted in the future.

Author Contribution Rates

The 1st Author: 50%, 2nd Author: 50% contributed to the study.

Conflict of Interest Statement

Our article titled "Teacher opinions about MindUP curriculum" has no financial conflict of interest with any institution, organization, or person. There is also no conflict of interest between the authors.

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Genişletilmiş Özet

Bilinçli farkındalık (mindfulness), bireylerin anı fark ederek, yargılamadan ve dikkatle odaklanarak beden ve zihin durumlarını izlemelerini sağlayan bir yaklaşımdır. Bebekler ve küçük çocuklar, anı yaşamaya daha yatkındırlar çünkü zihinsel olarak geçmişe veya geleceğe çok fazla odaklanmazlar. Ancak bu farkındalık genellikle bilinçli bir kontrol veya kendini gözlemlenme ile bağlantılı değildir. Bireyler, doğdukları andan itibaren bilinçli farkındalığı anlama ve kavrama yeteneğiyle dünyaya gelmektedirler. Fakat önemli olan doğuştan gelen bu yeteneğin yaşamın hangi alanında beceriye dönüştürülerek uygulandığıdır. Dolayısıyla bilinçli farkındalık zamanla geliştirilmesi gereken bir beceridir.

Eğitim sistemlerinde pozitif psikoloji ve sosyal-duygusal öğrenmeye yönelik yaklaşımlar giderek fazla ilgi görmektedir. Bilinçli farkındalık, bu yaklaşımların bir parçası olarak, öğrencilere yalnızca akademik başarı değil, aynı zamanda zihinsel sağlık ve sosyal beceriler kazandırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Okullarda uygulanan bilinçli farkındalık programları öğrencilerin stresle başa çıkma, dikkatlerini toplama ve duygusal denge sağlama yeteneklerini geliştirmeye yönelik bir eğitim metodudur. Bu eğitim metodları sayesinde öğrencilerin hem akademik hem de kişisel gelişim açısından birçok fayda sağlama potansiyelleri vardır. Bilinçli farkındalık programlarının öğrenciler üzerinde yarattığı etkiler üzerine yapılan araştırmalar stres ve kaygı azalması, duygusal düzenleme, odaklanma ve konsantrasyon, akademik başarı, empati ve sosyal beceriler, davranış yönetimi gibi birçok alanda olumlu değişimler olduğunu ortaya koymaktadırlar. Genel olarak, bilinçli farkındalık programlarının öğrenciler üzerinde duygusal, bilişsel ve sosyal açıdan pek çok fayda sağladığı, bu programların okullarda giderek daha fazla tercih edilmesine neden olmaktadır. Bu araştırmada MindUP öğretim programının ilkökul 3. sınıf öğrencilerinin zihinsel zindeliği geliştirmelerine yardımcı olabileceği düşünülen davranışları üzerinde oluşturduğu değişikliklerin öğretmen gözünden incelenmesi amaçlanmıştır. MindUP, çocuklar ve gençler için geliştirilen, bilinçli farkındalık temelli bir eğitim programıdır. Hawn Vakfı'nın öncülüğünde geliştirilen bu program, sosyal-duygusal öğrenme (SEL), pozitif psikoloji ve nörobilim temelli yaklaşımlar içerir. MindUP öğretim programı 15 derslik bir müfredat şeklinde sunulur ve bu dersler sınıf ortamında öğretmen rehberliğinde yapılır. Her ders, bilinçli farkındalık egzersizleri, pozitif psikoloji aktiviteleri ve nörobilim temelli bilgileri içerir. Öğrenciler bu

becerileri günlük hayatlarında kullanabilecekleri şekilde öğrenirler. MindUP öğretim programının öğrenci davranışları üzerinde oluşturduğu değişiklikleri incelemek amacıyla bu araştırmanın nitel araştırma yöntemlerinden olan durum çalışması modelinde desenlenmesi uygun görülmüştür. Bu çalışmada, Ordu Üniversitesi Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler Araştırma Etik Kurulu'ndan 27 Aralık 2021 tarih ve 2021-249 sayılı karar ile araştırma ve yayın etiği kapsamında etik kurul izni alınmıştır. Araştırmanın çalışma grubunu 2021-2022 eğitim öğretim yılının bahar döneminde Samsun ili merkez ilçesinde bulunan bir devlet okulunda öğrenim görmekte olan 3. sınıf öğrencileri oluşturmaktadır. "MindUP Öğretim Programı" kitabındaki toplam 15 dersin sınıf geliştirme modeli olarak kullanılması amacıyla program bir sınıf kapsamındaki bütün öğrencilere uygulanmıştır. Bu doğrultuda yaşları 8 ila 9 arasında değişen toplam 26 kişilik bir öğrenci grubu ile çalışma tamamlanmıştır. Durum çalışması modelinin kullanıldığı bu çalışmada veriler, kolay ulaşılabılır durum örnekleme yolu ile Milli Eğitim Bakanlığına bağlı bir ilkokulda görev yapmakta olan sınıf öğretmeninden yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme formu yoluyla elde edilmiştir. Araştırmada verilerin toplanma süreci toplam 8 hafta sürmüştür. Elde edilen sözel verileri çözümlmek ve değerlendirmek için içerik analizi tekniği kullanılmıştır. Veriler, analiz sonucunda tema ve alt temalara ayrılarak kategorize edilmiştir. Araştırma sonucunda uygulanan MindUP öğretim programının çocukların dikkat, odaklanma, başka bireylerle olan iletişim, yardımseverlik, öz düzenleme davranışları üzerinde olumlu etkileri olduğu görülmüştür. Ayrıca yaratıcılık, keşif yapma (merak), işbirliği, empati ve sosyalleşme gibi çocukların çok yönlü farkındalıklarına katkı sağladığı araştırmanın sonuçları arasındadır. MindUP öğretim programının çocukların farkındalıklarına katkı sağlama açısından uygulanabilir olduğu fakat aynı programın 4. ve 5. Sınıf öğrencilerine uygulandığında daha çok verim alınacağı öğretmen tarafından bildirilen görüşler arasındadır.