



Research Article

An Investigation into Iranian EAP Teachers' Mindfulness and Job Satisfaction

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ABSTRACT

To meet the specific needs of learners, English for Academic Purposes (EAP) courses burden teachers with many challenges and stressful situations which in turn necessitates caring about EAP teachers' positive emotions. Thus, this study investigated the levels of job satisfaction and mindfulness among Iranian EAP teachers. It also probed the differences among the EAP teachers with different demographic characteristics regarding their mindfulness and job satisfaction. Moreover, it examined the relationship between these two variables. To this end, data was collected from 100 Iranian EAP instructors with different demographics through two questionnaires on job satisfaction and mindfulness. The results indicated the levels of mindfulness and job satisfaction among Iranian EAP teachers. It was also found that EAP teachers differing in gender, age, and experience, but not in school of study, differed in their levels of job satisfaction and mindfulness. Furthermore, Pearson correlation showed a positive significant relationship between these two variables. Finally, some implications for EAP teachers and policymakers are presented.

Introduction

The demanding nature of teaching English for Academic Purposes (EAP), a branch of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses is reflected in many studies (Basturkmen, 2010; Robinson, 1991, Hutchinson & Waters, 1987, to name a few). However, there has been little concern about assisting EAP teachers through presenting appropriate training courses in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context (Ding & Champion, 2016).

Job satisfaction, to Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2011 a), is “an overall or general feeling of satisfaction and enjoyment with one’s work” (p. 373). More specifically, teachers’ job satisfaction is conceptualized as “teachers’ affective reactions to their work or to their teaching role” (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011 b, p. 1030). It is suggested that when teachers are satisfied, the quality of their performance increases as well (Soodmand Afshar & Doosti, 2016). The level of job satisfaction varies

regarding several demographic factors (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011 b).

Mindfulness, a main area of positive psychology, can improve education, student-teacher relationships, and teacher well-being (Jennings et al., 2013; Roeser et al., 2012). While the necessity of studying positive variables in the lives of language teachers is acknowledged (MacIntyre et al., 2019), language learners' positive emotions have been studied (e.g. Khajavy et al., 2020). On the other hand, while teachers' (Chen, 2010; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011) and particularly language teachers' job satisfaction and its relation to their performance have been the subject of many studies, EAP teachers' occupational well-being has less been attended to. Hence, due to the importance of EAP courses, their demanding nature on teachers, and considering their burnout levels (Author et al., 2020), and lack of information on EAP teachers' job satisfaction, the current study aimed at investigating the level of Iranian EAP teachers' job satisfaction and mindfulness, the relationship between them, and the differences of these two variables among EAP teachers with different demographics including age, gender, years of experience in teaching EAP courses, and different schools (humanities, engineering, science, and medical).

Review of the Literature

EAP

Teaching is often regarded as a stressful occupation (Greenglass & Burke, 2003; Kostoulas & Mercer, 2018) which burdens teachers with too much work overload along with conflicting demands and lack of recognition for accomplishments from different groups such as administrators, colleagues, and students (Greenglass & Burke, 2003). Much in the same vein, considering teaching a second language to be emotionally charged, Richards (2020) refers to the effect of affective psychology and affective turn in applied linguistics and emphasizes that learning to teach not only involves conveying the content, but also entails managing emotional aspects of teaching and learning. To Richards (2020), emotions are affected by relationships between teachers and teaching context, and teachers' feelings about themselves, their learners and colleagues, teaching

context, resources and activities, and benefits and rewards. He argues for improving teacher emotional competence in teacher education programs.

English for Specific Purposes (ESP), being concerned with teaching English for studying a specific discipline (Robinson, 1991), is divided into two branches one of which is English for Academic Purposes (EAP) (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). ESP courses have some specific goals, and assume different roles for teachers. Thus, ESP teachers are expected to meet the unique demands of teaching language in such context-specific courses (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987).

EAP literature is also replete with studies reflecting the abundance of challenges EAP teachers confront (Author et al., 2020) and dearth of teacher training courses which makes teaching EAP courses more difficult (Basturkmen, 2010; Ding & Campion, 2016). Among the mostly reflected problems in such courses, reference can be made to out of date course books (Anthony, 2011; Author et al., 2011), inappropriateness of the classes (not being well-ventilated) (Author et al., 2011; Ding & Campion, 2016; Robinson, 1991; Soodmand Afshari & Doosti, 2016), lack of respect and social status of EAP teachers as compared to those of other professions (Anthony, 2011), and lack of systematic teacher training and teacher education programs (Basturkmen, 2010; Hutchinson & Waters, 1987), teachers' inadequate linguistic and content knowledge (Soodman Afshar & Movassagh, 2016) and students' inappropriate GEP level (Author et al., 2011; Ding & Campion, 2016; Robinson, 1991) and motivation (Author et al., 2011).

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction refers to "employee attitudes, including pay, promotion, supervision, fringe benefits, contingent rewards, operating procedures, coworkers, nature of work, and communication" (Spector, 1985, p. 693). Teachers' job satisfaction, as defined by Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2011 b), is "teachers' affective reactions to their work or to their teaching role" (p. 1030) which influences and improves their performance in educational settings (Jepson & Forrest, 2006; Soodmand Afshar & Doosti, 2016). Herzberg et al. (1959) define high

attitudes towards doing the job (e.g. recognition, achievement, interesting work, responsibility, and advancement) as satisfiers and attitudes towards the job context (e.g. low salary, poor working conditions, bad policies, administration, supervision, and interpersonal relationships) as dissatisfiers.

Mindfulness

Mindfulness refers to paying purposeful, non-judgmental attention to the present moment (Kabat-Zinn, 1994) which reflects three axioms of specifying the outcomes or goals and attending to the internal and external experience of the moment through bare and neutral awareness (Shapiro et al., 2006). It helps teachers reduce stress, manage behavior, improve self-esteem, gain a holistic view of the curriculum, and convey the content (Albrecht et al. 2012). It should also be emphasized that mindfulness is considered as a condition and an attribute that can be built and improved through practice (Brown et al., 2007).

Mindful awareness practices promote a "non-elaborative, nonjudgmental, present-centered awareness in which each thought, feeling, or sensation that arises in the attentional field is acknowledged and accepted as it is" (Bishop et al., 2004, p. 232). Brown et al. (2007) argue for the positive effects of mindfulness including mental and physical health and interpersonal relationships in general. But Jennings et al. (2013) argue teachers' mindfulness practices, through nonjudgmental awareness and enhancing teachers' social and emotional competence, result in improvements in teacher well-being, teacher-student relationships, learners' academic achievements and behavior, and classroom organization. In the same vein, Skinner and Beers (2016) review the literature on mindfulness and define it as a natural mode of attention, awareness, and consciousness characterized by process-oriented-ness, receptivity, clarity, empirical stance, flexibility, steadiness, and presence. They also refer to the demanding nature of teaching which entails using coping strategies and suggest mindfulness as a coping strategy to enhance their personal resources and cope more constructively with their challenges and classroom experiences.

Similarly, Roeser et al. (2012) refer to the emotionally and attentionally demanding nature of teaching which entails relationships with administrators, colleagues, and learners, and argue for mindfulness training as a strategy for regulating emotions to be used for teacher professional development. They believe mindfulness can enhance education and argue for the advantages of mindfulness for students through improving classroom climate and student-teacher relationships on one hand and teacher well-being through enhancing engagement and job satisfaction, on the other hand. Researchers also underscore the role of mindfulness in enhancing language learners' enjoyment (Huang, 2022), reducing students' academic disengagement (Xue, 2023), educators' anxieties and worries (Wang, 2022), EFL teachers' resilience, well-being, and teacher-student interactions (Çiçek & Gürbüz, 2023).

Empirical Studies

As for the most related empirical studies on job satisfaction, reference can be made to Skaalvik and Skaalvik's (2011 b) study which investigated job satisfaction, emotional exhaustion, feeling of belonging, and their motivation to leave in relation to some school-related factors such as relations with colleagues and time pressure among 2569 elementary and middle school teachers in Norway. Considering the demographic factors of gender and age, they found that female teachers experienced higher level of job satisfaction than males. They also found older teachers to be more satisfied than younger ones.

Hue and Lau (2015) analyzed the effect of a mindfulness training program on enhancing well-being of teachers among 70 pre-service teachers in China. The results of their univariate analysis showed a significant increase in both mindfulness and well-being. Results of regression analysis also revealed that mindfulness can predict well-being, stress and anxiety significantly. Furthermore, the results of the qualitative data depicted the efficiency of this program.

Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2015) investigated 30 teachers' job satisfaction, stress, and coping strategies qualitatively and introduced working with children and seeing their learning, unpredictability of challenges, cooperation with colleagues in

planning and instruction and learning from each other, and autonomy and independence as sources of job satisfaction. They also introduced sources of stress which included responsibility for students' special needs, students' misbehavior, conflict in their beliefs and educational goals, teamwork, and lack of status of teaching. As for variations in teachers' stress with their demographics, they reported that teachers of different ages experienced similar sources of stress but they applied coping strategies.

Sadeghi and Sa'adatpourvahid (2016) studied job satisfaction and sources of stress among 149 Iranian EFL teachers using an adapted questionnaire. They reported dissatisfaction of more than one-third (34.3%) of the participants. Soodmand Afshar and Doosti (2016) analyzed job satisfaction and dissatisfaction of EFL teachers in Iranian secondary schools from teachers' and students' perspectives using a questionnaire and an interview protocol. They reported that teachers with job satisfaction performed better than dissatisfied ones. They also reported sources resulting in teachers' dissatisfaction which included demanding work, low pay, and having to work in a second job.

Rezaei et al. (2021) investigated job satisfaction among EFL teachers and reported no difference between male and female teachers in this regard. While teachers with levels of education had a positive relation to job satisfaction, teaching experience was negatively correlated with it. In a case study, Morris and Mo (2023) studied early career motives and job satisfaction and dissatisfaction experienced by a Chinese and an expatriate English instructor at a Chinese university and reported they were satisfied with extrinsic motives of their jobs such as external recognition, autonomy, flexibility, but had concerns about professional development. One of them also was dissatisfied with the lack of recognition and the institute's subordination of teaching to research. Moreover, as one of them found the relationships at work place satisfying, the other one was not satisfied with the workplace relationships.

Considering the demanding nature of teaching and teaching EAP courses, and dearth of studies on their emotions, and the significance of job satisfaction and mindfulness on successful performance, this study investigated EAP teachers' job satisfaction and mindfulness and their relationships and variations among EAP teachers with different demographics. More specifically, the research questions of the study included:

1. What are the levels of EAP teachers' job satisfaction and mindfulness?
2. Are there any statistically significant differences in job satisfaction and mindfulness of EAP teachers of different demographics (gender, age, years of experience in teaching EAP courses, and field of EAP courses being taught)?
3. Is there any statistically significant relationship between EAP teachers' job satisfaction and mindfulness?

Methodology

Design and Context of the Study

In Iran, university students pass compulsory EAP courses which are taught by those who had majored in either English-related majors (including English teaching, literature, or translation) or other majors (e.g. chemistry, physics, psychology, etc.). They are called language teachers and content instructors, respectively. This descriptive study analyzed the existing levels of job satisfaction and mindfulness among EAP teachers with no intervention. It also considered the relationship between these two variables.

Participants

A total number of 100 EAP instructors, working in state universities in Golestan, Mazandaran, and Gilan provinces, Iran, participated in the current research. They were either language teachers or content instructors teaching EAP courses at different schools of humanities, engineering, science, and medical sciences (Table 1).

Table 1.

Demographics of the Participants

Gender		Age			Years of Teaching Experience in EAP Courses			Field of EAP courses being taught			
M	F	30-37	38-44	45-50	1-4	5-12	12-20	H	E	S	M
48	52	39	40	21	34	42	24	34	30	20	16

M= male; F= female; H= Humanities; E= Engineering; S= Sciences; M= Medical studies

Instruments

Two different questionnaires were used to collect data on the participants' mindfulness and job satisfaction. What follows is a detailed introduction of these questionnaires.

Job Satisfaction Questionnaire. EAP teachers' job satisfaction was investigated using an adapted and translated version of the Iranian EFL Teachers' Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (IETJSQ) by Soodmand Afshar and Doosti (2016). It is worth mentioning that their questionnaire is based on the questionnaires developed by Lester (1984) and Hughes (2006). In the present study, Soodmand Afshar and Doosti's (2016) questionnaire was also translated into Persian and adapted to make it more appropriate for EAP instructors. It consists of 58 items on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5).

Mindfulness Questionnaire. EAP teachers' mindfulness was assessed using the translated and adapted version of teacher mindfulness in classroom context questionnaire (Rickert, 2016). It has 31 items on a five-point Likert scale which ranges from almost never (1) to almost always (5) and includes six subscales including calmness, clarity, kindness, reactivity, distractedness, and criticalness.

Data Collection Procedure

After translating and adapting the questionnaires, and seeking and applying the comments of EAP experts in panel discussions, the questionnaires were prepared. A profile of contact information (email addresses or office numbers) of EAP teachers was prepared by attending the universities in person or checking the websites of the universities. Then the questionnaires were piloted with 30 teachers with similar characteristics of the main population. After that, the questionnaires were put on a site named Porsline and their link was

sent to teachers who were willing to participate. Data was collected in the Spring semester, 2022.

Data Analysis Procedure

The construct validity and Cronbach's alpha reliability ($\alpha = .73$) of IETJSQ is reported to be acceptable by Soodmand Afshar and Doosti (2016). In this study, the reliability indices of the translated versions of IETJSQ and mindfulness questionnaire were assured in the piloting (.69, .70) and main administration (.72, .69), respectively. Construct validities of the questionnaires had been assured by their developers and their face validities were checked by 3 experts in EAP and some modifications were made to adapt the questionnaire to the Iranian EAP context. It is worth mentioning that before running inferential statistics, the normality of the data for job satisfaction ($p = .145$) and mindfulness ($p = .214$) of the participants were assured through Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests and, thus, parametric inferential tests were used to answer the research questions of the study. Mean was used to describe the levels of the participants' job satisfaction and mindfulness. Considering the normality of the data, independent samples t-test and ANOVA were used for analyzing the differences between 2 groups and more than two groups, respectively. The relationship between EAP teachers' job satisfaction and mindfulness was tested using Pearson correlation test as the data met its assumptions (i.e. truly continuous ordinal scale used in the questionnaires, normality of the data distribution, independence of the variables, and linearity of the relationship) (Hatch & Lazarton, 1991).

Results**Levels of EAP Teachers' Job Satisfaction and Mindfulness**

The level of Iranian EAP teachers' job satisfaction was assessed descriptively by

determining the items with the highest and lowest means (Table 2).

Table 2.

Main Findings of the EAP Teachers' Job Satisfaction Questionnaire

Means	Item	M	SD
Highest Means	item 11 (satisfying nature of teaching)	4.2	.46
	item 6 (helping learners to improve their learning)	4.18	.52
	item 7 (passion for teaching)	4.10	.74
Lowest Means	item 9 (enjoyable nature of teaching EAP courses)	4.02	.53
	item 18 (cleanness and ventilation of the classes)	3.7	.75
	item 13 (respectability and social status of teachers as compared to those of other professions)	3.14	.45
	item 16 (systematic teacher training and teacher education programs)	2.8	.71
	item 22 (up-to-datedness and the efficiency of the course books)	2.13	.62

As presented in Table 2, EAP teachers were satisfied with their jobs (item 11, M=4.2) because of helping learners to improve their learning (item 6, M=4.18) and their passion for teaching (item 7, M=4.10). However, up-to-datedness and efficiency of course books (item 22, M= 2.13) and systematic teacher training and teacher education programs (item 16, M=2.8) were not satisfying for EAP teachers as these two items had the minimum means. It is worth mentioning that EAP teachers were not satisfied with the cleanness and ventilation of the classes (item 18, M= 3.7) and respectability and social status of teachers as compared to those of other professions (item 13, M= 3.14).

To determine the level of mindfulness of EAP teachers, the mean scores of its components were computed by computing the items included in each subscale (Table 3).

Table 3.

The Order of the Mindfulness Components

Components	Mean	Std	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Kindness	4.56	.65	4.547	4.573
Calmness	4.12	.57	4.109	4.131

Clarity	3.55	.63	3.538	3.562
Criticalness	3.45	.66	3.437	3.463
Reactivity	3.36	.64	3.347	3.373
Distractedness	3.11	.48	3.101	3.119

Analyzing the level of Iranian EAP teachers' mindfulness indicated their high means in kindness (M=4.56) and calmness (M=4.12), and their means for criticalness was 3.55. Moreover, EAP teachers had low means in subscales of clarity (M=3.45), reactivity (3.36), and distractedness (3.11). It is worth mentioning that being mindful is defined in terms of high means in kindness, calmness, and clarity and low means in criticalness, reactivity, and distractedness. EAP teachers' means in kindness, calmness, reactivity, and distractedness signify their high level of mindfulness however their rather high mean in criticalness and lower means in clarity may indicate lack of mindfulness.

Variations in the EAP Teachers' Job Satisfaction and Mindfulness

To examine the gender-based differences in the EAP teachers' job satisfaction and mindfulness (Table 4), independent samples t-tests were run.

Table 4.
Gender-based Differences in EAP Teachers' Job Satisfaction and Mindfulness

Variable	Descriptive statistics				Inferential statistics								
	Male		Female		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances			t-test for Equality of Means					
	Mean	Std.	Mean	Std.	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	(2-Mean Difference)	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
												Lower	Upper
Job Satisfaction	3.325	.318	3.15	.346	.84	.560	2.60	98	.011	.173	.0666	.040	.305
Mindfulness	3.00	.464	.502	2.74	.85	.587	2.65	98	.009	.257	0.96	.064	.449

The results indicated that male and female EAP teachers differed in their job satisfaction and mindfulness as males had higher means with regard to both job satisfaction (3.32) and mindfulness (3.00) than women (3.15, 2.74).

To probe the differences in the job satisfaction and mindfulness of Iranian EAP teachers of different age groups, the participants were grouped

into 3 groups (30-37, 38-44, and over 45) whose mean scores in job satisfaction were 3.74, 3.48, and 3.60, respectively. Simply stated, the youngest group had the highest level of job satisfaction (Table 5). As for the mean differences in the mindfulness of the participants of different age groups (30-37= 3.72, 38-44= 3.47, and over 45= 3.68).

Table 5.
Differences in the Job Satisfaction and Mindfulness of EAP Teachers with Different Age Groups

Dependent Variable	Age	Descriptive statistics		Inferential statistics							
		Mean	Std.	95% Confidence Interval		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound						
Job Satisfaction	30-37	3.745	.287	3.652	3.838	Between Groups	1.306	2	.652	5.78	.004
	38-44	3.488	.423	3.352	3.624	Within Groups	10.956	97	.112		
	45-50	3.605	.206	3.514	3.696	Total	12.262	99			
Mindfulness	30-37	3.72	0.356	3.557	3.787	Between Groups	1.248	2	.624	4.042	.021
	38-44	3.48	0.468	3.327	3.627	Within Groups	14.972	97	.154		
	45-50	3.68	0.2841	3.451	3.709	Total	16.220	99			

As shown in Table 5, the differences in their job satisfaction were significant according to the results of ANOVA test ($F(2, 97) = 5.78, p (.004) < .05$). ANOVA test also showed significant differences among these groups in terms of their mindfulness ($F(2, 97) = 4.042, p = .021$).

In order to identify the exact sources of difference in job satisfaction and mindfulness among groups, Tukey HSD post-hoc comparisons

test was conducted (Table 6). Tukey HSD post-hoc comparisons test (Table 6) indicated that the youngest EAP teachers (30-37 years old) were significantly more satisfied compared to the second group (aged 38-44) ($sig. = .001$). However, the differences between the youngest and oldest group ($p = .128$) and the second group and oldest one ($p = .200$) were not significant.

Table 6.
Post Hoc Tests for Job Satisfaction and Mindfulness of EAP Teachers with Different Age Groups

Tukey HSD	(I) Age	(J) Age	(I-J) Mean Difference	Std. error	Sig.	Lower bound	Upper bound
Job Satisfaction	30-37	38-44	.257	.335	.001	.107	.407
		45-50	.140	.335	.128	-.042	.322
	38-44	45-50	-.117	.335	.200	-.298	.064
Mindfulness	30-37	38-44	.24	.393	.002	0.090	0.390
		38-44	45-50	.04	.393	.661	-0.142
		45-50	-.2	.393	.031	-0.381	-0.019

As for mindfulness, Post-hoc Tukey HSD test (Table 6) also showed that the mean scores of the youngest and oldest group were not significantly different ($p = .661$). However, the second group, which had the lowest mean in mindfulness, differed from the youngest ($p = .002$) and oldest group significantly ($p = .031$). It is worth mentioning that the youngest group had the highest mean in mindfulness too.

To probe the difference in the job satisfaction and mindfulness of Iranian EAP teachers with different years of experience in teaching EAP courses, Byrne’s (1999) classification which

includes 4 groups of (1-4, 5-12, 12-20, and more than 20 years) was used for classifying the participants, however, in this study, as there were no participants with over 20 years of experience, the last group (more than 20 years of experience) was not defined. Thus, they were divided into three main groups (novice= 1-4, experienced= 5-12, and highly experienced= over 12) whose means of job satisfaction were 4.18, 3.28, and 3.91, respectively (Table 7). Mean scores of the mindfulness of novice, experienced, and highly experienced EAP teachers were 3.78, 3.38, and 3.65, respectively.

Table 7.
Differences in the Job Satisfaction and Mindfulness of EAP Teachers with Different Years of Experience

Descriptive statistics				Inferential statistics							
Dependent Variable	Experience	Mean	Std.	95% Confidence Interval		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound						
Job Satisfaction	Novice	4.18	0.225	4.104	4.555	Between Groups	16.163	2	8.081	104.097	.000
	Experienced	3.28	0.305	3.188	3.372	Within Groups	7.53	97	.078		
	Highly experienced	3.91	0.195	3.832	3.832	Total	23.693	99			
Mindfulness	Novice	3.79	0.400	3.655	3.925	Between Groups	3.247	2	1.624	13.097	.000
	Experienced	3.38	0.335	3.279	3.481	Within Groups	12.067	97	.124		
	Highly experienced	3.63	0.310	3.506	3.754	Total	15.314	99			

As presented in Table 7, The means differences in the job satisfaction of these groups were statistically significant according to results of ANOVA test ($F(2, 97) = 104.097, p = .000$). ANOVA test also indicated that the differences in

the mindfulness of these groups were statistically significant ($F(2, 97) = 13.097, p = .000$). To further probe the differences in the job satisfaction and mindfulness of EAP teachers with different years of experience, post hoc Tukey test was run (Table 8).

Table 8.

Post Hoc Tests for Job Satisfaction and Mindfulness of EAP Teachers with Different Years of Teaching Experience

Tukey HSD	(I) Age	(J) Age	(I-J) Mean Difference	Std. error	Sig.	Lower bound	Upper bound
Job Satisfaction	novice	experienced	0.90	0.037	0.000	0.68	1.12
		Highly experienced	0.24	0.043	0.013	0.05	0.49
	experienced	Highly experienced	-0.63	0.041	0.000	-0.85	-0.41
Mindful-ness	Novice	experienced	.41	.059	.000	0.29	0.53
		Highly experienced	.16	.069	.057	-0.003	0.29
	experienced	Highly experienced	-.25	.066	.002	-0.38	-0.12

* the mean difference is significant at .05 levels.

The results of the post hoc Tukey test indicated that there were statistically significant differences among novice, experienced, and highly experienced EAP teachers in terms of their job satisfaction (Table 8). Job satisfaction decreased with years of experience in teaching EAP courses. Moreover, the results of the post hoc Tukey test revealed that novice EAP teachers had the highest level of mindfulness and highly experienced ones had the second highest mean in it (Table 8). However, there existed no significant difference

between highly experienced and novice teachers (p= .057).

The differences in job satisfaction and mindfulness among the EAP teachers teaching at different fields of EAP courses being taught including humanities, engineering, sciences, and medical studies were also tested (Table 9). Their mean scores were 3.78, 3.74, 3.75, and 3.44, respectively. Considering their mean scores in mindfulness (schools of humanities= 3.94, engineering= 3.83, sciences= 3.87, and medical studies= 3.71).

Table 9.

Differences in the Job Satisfaction and Mindfulness of EAP Teachers in Different EAP Courses Being Taught

Dependent Variable	Descriptive statistics				Inferential statistics						
	Schools	Mean	Std.	95% Confidence Interval		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound						
Mindfulness	Humanities	3.783	0.279	3.685	3.881	Between Groups	.223	3	.074	.869	.460
	Engineering	3.743	0.361	3.608	3.878	Within Groups	8.204	96	.085		
	Science	3.759	0.241	3.646	3.872	Total	8.427	99			
	Medical	3.642	0.224	3.521	3.759						
Mindfulness	Humanities	3.943	0.379	3.811	4.075	Between Groups	.590	3	.197	1.836	.146
	Engineering	3.830	0.307	3.715	3.945	Within Groups	10.287	96	.107		
	Science	3.878	0.349	3.715	4.041	Total		99			
	Medical	3.718	0.184	3.620	3.816						

According to Table 9, ANOVA test revealed no differences in the job satisfaction (F(3,96)= .86, p=.46) and mindfulness (F(3,96)= 1.83, p=.14) of EAP teachers in different fields of EAP.

The Relationship between EAP Teachers' Job Satisfaction and Mindfulness

The relation between job satisfaction and mindfulness of EAP teachers was tested by Pearson correlation (Table 10).

Table 10.
Pearson Correlation Test on the Relationship between Job Satisfaction and Mindfulness

	Job satisfaction	
Mindfulness	Pearson Correlation	.520**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	100

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The results of the correlation test indicated a large positive relationship between these two variables ($r=.52$, $N=100$, $sig.= 0.000$). The positive correlation for this question depicted that the more mindful EAP teachers are, the more satisfaction they feel in their teaching profession.

Discussion

Levels of Job Satisfaction and Mindfulness among EAP Teachers

Regarding the EAP teachers' job satisfaction questionnaire, the highest means were related to the enjoyable nature of teaching profession. EAP teachers were satisfied with their jobs because of the intrinsic aspects of their jobs such as their interest in teaching and helping learners to improve their learning (Author et al., 2022; Soodmand Afshar & Doosti, 2016). These are in line with Author et al. (2022) in that EAP teachers felt more job satisfaction through thinking about students' learning and satisfaction.

However, in line with the literature, our findings also revealed that EAP teachers were not satisfied with outdated course books (Anthony, 2011; Author et al., 2011), lack of systematic teacher training and teacher education programs (Basturkmen, 2010; Ding & Champion, 2016; Hutchinson & Waters, 1987), and respectability and social status of EAP teachers (Anthony, 2011) as compared to those of other professions. EAP teachers' dissatisfaction with the inappropriateness of the classes (not being well-ventilated) was in line with some studies (Author et al., 2011; Ding & Champion, 2016; Robinson, 1991; Soodmand Afshari & Doosti, 2016). On the contrary, complaints about the atmosphere of the classroom have not been an issue in western countries as stated by Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2011 b). To this end, the Iranian Ministry of Education was worried and decided to equip schools "with modern facilities

and equipment such as computers and the Internet, laboratories, libraries and other facilities required to promote the quality of education in Iranian schools" (Soodmand Afshar & Doosti, 2016, p.16).

In line with the definition of mindfulness in terms of high kindness, calmness, and clarity and low reactivity, distractedness, and criticalness (Rickert, 2016), while EAP teachers' kindness, calmness, reactivity, and distractedness demonstrated acceptable levels of mindfulness, they needed improvements in criticalness and clarity. These findings are not unexpected considering the diversity of roles and challenges for EAP teachers (Author et al., 2020) and the lack of EAP orthodoxy (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987) and EAP teacher training courses (Basturkmen, 2010; Basturkmen, 2010; Ding & Champion, 2016; Hutchinson & Waters, 1987) which leave EAP teachers on their own to get expertise through experience (Ding & Champion, 2016). EAP teachers' low means in clarity is not in line with Author et al. (2022) who reported EAP teachers' use of "clarifying my role, status, and goals as an EAP teacher at the beginning of the term" as one of the most frequently used coping strategies.

Differences in the Job Satisfaction and Mindfulness of Different Groups of EAP Teachers

The results depicted that males outperformed females in terms of mindfulness and job satisfaction which means that they were more mindful and satisfied compared to female teachers. This is in line with the Iranian EAP literature depicting gender differences in EAP teachers' coping strategies (Nazari & Atai, 2022), and marginalization of female teachers in decision-making in academic settings (Tavakoli & Tavakol, 2018). This study also contradicts Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2011 b) who reported female teachers' greater job satisfaction and Rezaei et al. (2021) who found no gender-based differences in EFL teachers' job satisfaction.

As for the age of the participants, unlike Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2011) who documented a positive relationship between job satisfaction and age, found out that the youngest EAP teachers had the highest mean ranks in both mindfulness and job satisfaction. Similarly, job satisfaction decreased with years of experience and the oldest group had

the lowest mean rank in mindfulness. It can be justified by the fact that novice EAP teachers are young, energetic, and motivated. However, this is not in line with Author et al. (2020) who found the youngest group to have higher levels of burnout. It could be justified by the fact that they are almost new in the system and they might be happy and satisfied with finding the position and try to do their best to meet the requirements and expectations of the courses and improve their teaching. In other words, teaching EAP courses can be both satisfying and demanding for them.

This is while literature argues for the positive and effective role of experience in teaching EAP courses in gaining expertise (Ding & Campion, 2016) and content knowledge mastery (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). It can be argued that while expertise and knowledge increase with experience, satisfaction decreases. This dissatisfaction can be justified by the stance of EAP courses in educational settings, the unrecognized value of ESP courses (Anthony, 2011), inadequate pay (Robinson, 1991; Anthony, 2011), and limited resources, support, and opportunities for development (Ding & Campion, 2016).

Relationship between Job Satisfaction and Mindfulness

The positive relationship between job satisfaction and mindfulness can be justified by the fact that when individuals are mindful, their stress level can be decreased which makes them more satisfied. Considering the literature on the effects of mindfulness on mental and physical health (Brown et al. 2007; Wang, 2022), teacher well-being (Jennings et al., 2013), and performance (Skinner & Beers, 2016) such a positive relationship is not unforeseeable. This positive relationship is also in line with Roeser et al. (2012) who argue for the positive relationship between job satisfaction and mindfulness and argue for including mindfulness training in teacher development programs. This is also in line with Hue and Lau (2015) who report a positive correlation between teachers' mindfulness and well-being. Much in the same vein, Jepson and Forrest (2006) consider job satisfaction as one of the factors affecting teachers' performance.

Conclusion

This research examined the association between mindfulness and job satisfaction in general and took demographic characteristics into consideration in particular. It indicated a positive relationship between the variables under study. Also, EAP teachers with differences in their age, gender, and years of teaching experience differed significantly in terms of both mindfulness and job satisfaction. However, there was no statistically significant difference in both job satisfaction and mindfulness of EAP teachers teaching at different EAP schools.

The findings of the study may have some implications for different stakeholders in EAP courses. EAP teachers may be informed of the emotionally charged nature of their occupation and reflect on their own job satisfaction and mindfulness and probe their strengths and weaknesses and strive to improve their occupational wellbeing. Considering the significance of job satisfaction, moreover, as recognition, achievement, interesting work, responsibility, and advancement are satisfiers (Herzberg et al. 1959), their lack can lead to dissatisfaction as EAP teachers complained from lack of resources such as training courses, appropriate classes (Ding & Campion, 2016), and social status and respectability of EAP teachers (Anthony, 2011; Robinson, 1991). Needless to say, educational administrators, policymakers, and organizational factors play crucial roles in enhancing EAP teachers' job satisfaction by improving their working conditions.

Considering the workplace relationship as one of the challenges in EAP contexts (Author et al., 2022; Ding & Campion, 2016), and the inadequacy of social support EAP teachers receive from students (Johns, as cited in Hutchinson & Waters, 1987) and organizations (Anthony, 2011), and considering the effectiveness of mindfulness in improving interpersonal relationships in general (Brown et al., 2007) and student-teacher relationships in particular (Çiçek & Gürbüz, 2023), it can be argued that mindfulness practices may improve EAP teacher well-being by improving interpersonal teacher-student relationships (Çiçek & Gürbüz, 2023; Jennings et al., 2013; Roeser et al., 2012) and relationships with colleagues and administrators (Roeser et al., 2012). Thus, teacher educators are suggested to consider mindfulness practices to bring

about the development of teachers and effectiveness of EAP courses (Roeser et al., 2012). The significance of mindfulness practices for EAP teachers can be highlighted by considering the association between job satisfaction and mindfulness of EAP teachers (Roeser et al., 2012), and the fact that inadequate interpersonal relationships, considered as dissatisfiers (Herzberg et al. 1959), can be improved by mindfulness practices. Also, taking demographic characteristics into consideration, policymakers can perceive the effect of gender, teaching experience, and age with regard to their mindfulness and job satisfaction so that specific strategies will be provided for each group.

Like any other study, this study also had some limitations. One limitation was that no qualitative data was gathered to increase the validity of the results. Also, the small sample size, caused by EAP teachers' reluctance to participate in the study, was considered as another limitation. Since various demographic characteristics were considered, it would be better to have a larger sample to include a representative number regarding each group. Specifically, in classifying the participants based on their years of experience, no teachers with more than 20 years of experience participated in the study, so such a group is not included in the analysis. The current study was a quantitative one; however, future research can take a qualitative or triangulated approach to EAP teachers' job satisfaction and mindfulness to verify the findings of the questionnaires and present a contextual understanding of the factors affecting EAP teachers' satisfaction, dissatisfaction, and mindfulness. Investigating the relationships between mindfulness and other concepts such as leadership, management style, and organizational mattering can also reveal insightful findings. Future studies may also consider training mindfulness techniques for enhancing job satisfaction.

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