

MINDFULNESS AS A PATHWAY TO SUSTAINABLE LIVING: A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS

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ABSTRACT

Sustainable living has become a vital educational and societal goal in the 21st century, driven by environmental degradation, overconsumption, and climate change that threaten global health. Simultaneously, mindfulness has gained recognition as a practice that enhances awareness, intentionality, and psychological resilience. Recent researches suggest that mindfulness can enhance ecological awareness, reduce materialism, and promote sustainable decision-making. In India, the National Education Policy (NEP, 2020) emphasises integrating sustainability and values into teacher education, aiming to prepare future teachers as role models for sustainable communities. However, there is scarcity of researches on mindfulness supporting sustainable living among commerce-focused teacher trainees. This study qualitatively examined how mindfulness practices shape sustainable attitudes, behaviours, and the professional identity development of pre-service teachers i.e. B.Com.B.Ed. ITEP students. Purposive sampling was preferred where 25 ITEP students (15 from Sem 3 and 10 from Sem 5) participated in two 90 minutes focus groups. With their consent, written responses were recorded and transcribed verbatim. The data were then analysed manually following Braun and Clarke's six-phase thematic framework, which involved iterative coding, clustering, and theme creation. Four main themes emerged: (1) Awareness through mindfulness, focusing on intentional reflection and ecological observation; (2) Sustainable habits, such as mindful consumption, conservation efforts, and community impact; (3) Teacher identity, where students highlighted practicing sustainability before teaching it; and (4) Challenges and barriers, including affordability, peer influence, and institutional limitations. A comparative analysis revealed a developmental progression: third-semester students primarily focused on personal lifestyle changes, whereas fifth-semester students integrated mindfulness into their professional identity and pedagogical responsibilities.

The findings suggest that mindfulness acts as a bridge between self-regulation, sustainable practices, and teacher identity, underscoring the transformative impact of teacher education on sustainable development. Incorporating mindfulness-based sustainability into ITEP curricula can enable future teachers to act as role models, aligning with NEP 2020 and the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Keywords: Mindfulness, Sustainable living, Teacher education, Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP), National Education Policy 2020, Qualitative research

INTRODUCTION

Sustainable living has become a pressing focus in education and society in the 21st century, due to environmental degradation, overconsumption, and climate change that threaten global health (Kassel, Rimanoczy, & Mitchell, 2016). At the same time, mindfulness has garnered

global recognition as a practice that enhances awareness, promotes intentional action, and fosters mental well-being (Kabat-Zinn, 2003). Researchers increasingly believe that mindfulness can encourage environmentally friendly behaviors by heightening ecological awareness, decreasing materialistic tendencies, and supporting sustainable decisions (Ericson, Kjønstad, & Barstad, 2014).

In India, the National Education Policy (NEP, 2020) emphasises integrating values, sustainability, and holistic approaches into teacher education, encouraging future educators to serve as promoters of sustainable communities. Nonetheless, there has been limited research on how mindfulness influences sustainable living among teacher trainees, especially those from commerce-focused streams like B.Com B.ed. These students form a distinct group, combining a consumerist economic perspective with ecological and educational commitments.

This study examines how mindfulness practices affect sustainable lifestyle choices among ITEP B.Com B.Ed students. It focuses on the perceptions of third- and fifth-semester students regarding mindfulness and sustainability, and how these experiences contribute to their development of teacher identities.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Mindfulness continues to grow as a powerful teaching tool. Meiklejohn et al. (2012) showed that school-based mindfulness programs enhance student resilience, focus, and emotional control. Shapiro, Brown, and Astin (2011) found that mindfulness in higher education promotes ethical thinking and academic resilience. Building on this, Dunning et al. (2019) reported improvements in socio-emotional skills and classroom participation through mindfulness practices. In 2021, Franco et al. observed that structured mindfulness training significantly lowered college stress and boosted focus. Most recently, Roeser et al. (2022) emphasised that teachers' mindfulness positively influences classroom climate and, thus, student outcomes, highlighting the mutual benefits for both teachers and students.

Research emphasises mindfulness as a crucial factor in promoting sustainable behavior. Brown and Kasser (2005) initially identified an inverse relationship between mindfulness and materialism. Ericson et al. (2014) further demonstrated that individuals with a mindful approach tend to avoid impulsive consumption. Rosenberg (2004) also noted that mindfulness enhances empathy and reduces ecological harm. More recent research expands on these findings: Geiger et al. (2019) connected mindful awareness to environmentally friendly choices by limiting impulsive buying. Thiermann and Sheate's 2020 systematic review asserts that mindfulness supports sustainability through compassion and a feeling of connectedness with nature. In 2024, Jansen et al. found that aspects of mindfulness, such as outer awareness and insight, foster sustainable attitudes and actions through mediators like connectedness to nature and pro-social behaviour. In 2025, Işıkgöz's study on physical education teachers revealed a positive correlation between intrapersonal mindfulness and sustainability skills, highlighting the role of mindfulness in educator training.

Embedding sustainability in teacher education is crucial for enhancing the quality of education and fostering ecological responsibility. Tilbury (2011) advocated for including sustainability in initial teacher training to develop educators as role models for sustainability. Anderson (2019) highlighted that pre-service teachers should internalise sustainable values beyond just theoretical understanding. McKeown and Hopkins (2020) suggested combining curricular innovation with personal growth. Wamsler et al. (2021) showed that integrating contemplative practices like mindfulness improves teachers' ability to incorporate sustainability into their teaching methods. Additionally, Işıkgöz's 2025 findings indicate that

mindfulness among teachers is connected to stronger sustainability skills—an insight with wide-reaching implications for sustainability-oriented teacher preparation.

RESEARCH GAP

Despite the growing connections between mindfulness, sustainability, and educational practices, several important gaps still exist. Most research focuses on general populations (e.g., Brown & Kasser, 2005; Geiger et al., 2019), with limited attention to pre-service teachers. While teacher education experts emphasise the importance of sustainability and mindfulness (Tilbury, 2011; Wamsler et al., 2021), few studies investigate how teacher trainees personally adopt and practice these ideas. Additionally, discipline-specific contexts, such as B.Com.B.Ed. ITEP programme which combines commerce education and teacher training, remain unexplored. Research in the Indian context is also limited, despite NEP 2020 emphasising mindfulness and sustainability in teacher education. This study addresses these gaps by qualitatively examining how B.Com.B.Ed. ITEP students in India view the relationship between mindfulness and sustainable living during their training.

OBJECTIVES

1. To explore perceptions of mindfulness among pre-service teachers i.e. B.Com.B.Ed. ITEP students.
2. To examine the relationship between mindfulness and sustainable lifestyle practices.
3. To identify the challenges in integrating mindfulness and sustainability into daily student life.
4. To interpret how teacher trainees envision themselves as mindful, eco-conscious educators.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a **qualitative exploratory design** using focus group interviews.

Participants

- Sample size: 25 B.Com.B.Ed. ITEP students
- Composition: 15 B.Com.B.Ed. ITEP students from the 3rd semester and 10 students from the 5th semester of B.Com.B.Ed. ITEP
- Sampling method: Purposive sampling to ensure gender balance and willingness to participate.

Data Collection

- Tool: Semi-structured focus group interview guide.
- Sessions: Two focus groups, each lasting 90 minutes.
- Recording & Transcription: With consent, detailed notes of responses were recorded and later transcribed verbatim for analysis.

Data Analysis

Two focus groups (3rd semester, n=15, 5th semester, n=10) were transcribed word-for-word. Using Braun & Clarke (2006) as a guide, we performed manual open coding, followed by axial clustering and theme consolidation. An audit trail was maintained with date-stamped code lists, evolving definitions, and memo notes. To ensure reliability, 25–30% of excerpts

were double-coded, and discrepancies were resolved through negotiated consensus. Reflexive memos recorded assumptions and key decision points.

From codes to themes (quick overview of the codebook)

Understanding Table 1: Each code provides its operational definition, guidelines on what to include or exclude, and a representative quote code grouped into four themes addressing RQ1–RQ5.

Table 1. Codebook snapshot (operational definitions, inclusion/exclusion, exemplar quotes)

Code (cluster)	Operational definition	Include / Exclude	Exemplar quote (Student)
Attentional pause (Awareness)	Moment of stopping/reflecting before acting (buying/eating/using)	Include: “think twice,” pausing, noticing. Exclude: sheer lack of money/time.	“Now I think twice before shopping, whether I really need it.” (S2, 3rd)
Embodied regulation (Awareness)	Linking mindfulness to bodily regulation (food, sleep, stress)	Include: healthy eating, calm, breath. Exclude: generic “healthy lifestyle” w/o reflection.	“Mindfulness helps me eat less junk food and I feel healthier.” (S1, 3rd)
Ecological noticing (Awareness)	Affective/cognitive noticing of environmental impact	Include: guilt about plastic, noticing waste. Exclude: rule-following without reflection.	“I feel guilty when I see plastic bottles; I carry my steel bottle.” (S3, 3rd)
Mindful consumption (Habits)	Choosing less/greener; resisting impulse/ads	Include: fewer purchases, cloth bags. Exclude: saving money only.	“I carry my steel bottle ... I buy less fast fashion.” (S3, S12, 3rd)
Resource stewardship (Habits)	Conserving water/electricity; recycling	Include: switching off, water awareness. Exclude: bill-cutting w/o reflection.	“I use less electricity now.” (S16, 5th)
Community spillover (Habits)	Influencing peers/family to adopt practices	Include: convincing parents/roommates. Exclude: online reposts without own practice.	“I encouraged my parents to use cloth bags.” (S13, 3rd)
Practice-before-preach (Teacher identity)	Linking personal practice to professional ethics	Include: role modelling, integrity. Exclude: abstract moralising.	“Teachers cannot preach unless they practice sustainability.” (S18, 5th)
Pedagogical integration (Teacher identity)	Concrete ways to embed mindfulness/sustainability in teaching	Include: activities, clubs, and classroom norms. Exclude: one-off events sans reflection.	“We should show children how to live simply .” (S8, 3rd)
Affordability	Costs of eco-products,	Include: “costlier,”	“Eco-friendly

constraints (Barriers)	access	budget limits. Exclude: general thrift.	products are costlier , so I struggle.” (S14, 3rd)
Institutional gaps (Barriers)	Lack of bins, facilities, and green infrastructure	Include: no segregation, hostel issues. Exclude: personal forgetfulness.	“Institution doesn’t provide waste segregation. ” (S20, 5th)
Cultural/peer drag (Barriers)	Peer norms favouring convenience/consumption	Include: pressure to conform, teasing. Exclude: isolated disagreements.	“Hostel life makes it hard... everyone prefers convenience. ” (S9, 3rd)
Consistency difficulty (Barriers)	Struggle to keep up with practice habitually	Include: forgetting, lapses. Exclude: deliberate refusal.	“It’s difficult to practice daily , sometimes I forget.” (S5, 3rd)

Theme-by-theme analysis (with sub-themes, quotes, and RQ links)

Theme 1 — Awareness through Mindfulness (RQ1)

Sub-themes include: (a) Attentional pause, (b) Embodied regulation, (c) Ecological noticing. Students described mindfulness as a pause before making decisions (' think twice”), a bodily regulation (such as eating less junk food and responding more calmly), and a heightened awareness of environmental impact (feeling' guilt” about plastic, and recognising water waste).

Interpretation: Mindfulness acts as a mental and emotional filter that helps decrease impulsive behaviours and highlights core values prior to acting—aligning with studies connecting mindfulness to reduced materialism and increased intentionality.

Illustrative quotes: S1, S2, S3 (3rd); S16 (5th).

Theme 2 — Sustainable Habits (RQ2)

Sub-themes include (a) mindful consumption, (b) resource stewardship, and (c) community spillover. Awareness has led to practical habits such as using reusable containers, cloth bags, reducing electricity and water use, and planting trees. Some students also influenced their families and peers.

Interpretation: Transitioning from reflection to action suggests a behavioural route aligned with the concept that mindful awareness triggers pro-environmental behaviour.

Illustrative quotes: S3, S13 (3rd); S16, S22, S24 (5th).

Theme 3 — Teacher Identity and Role Modelling (RQ4)

Sub-themes: (a) Practice-before-preach integrity, (b) Pedagogical integration. Particularly in the 5th semester, students emphasised that credibility requires embodied sustainability: living it before teaching it; they also discussed integrating mindfulness for sustainability into activities and classroom routines.

Interpretation: Mindfulness underpins an ethic of professional coherence by aligning personal practice with pedagogical messaging, which is essential to sustainability education.

Illustrative quotes: S8 (3rd); S18, S24 (5th).

Theme 4 — Challenges and Barriers (RQ5)

Sub-themes include: (a) affordability constraints, (b) institutional gaps, (c) cultural/peer influence, and (d) difficulty maintaining consistency. The third semester focused on personal barriers such as cost, peer pressure, and inconsistency, whereas the fifth semester emphasised systemic barriers like waste management infrastructure and campus facilities.

Interpretation: Barriers function on various levels; without structural support, individual mindfulness efforts are strenuous to expand.

Illustrative quotes: S14, S5, S9 (3rd); S20 (5th).

Cross-semester comparison (salience and progression)

Table 2. Sub-theme prevalence by semester (indicative distinct-student mentions)

Sub-theme	3rd sem (n=15)	5th sem (n=10)	Pattern
Attentional pause	9	6	Common early; stabilises later
Embodied regulation	8	4	More salient in third (personal health)
Ecological noticing	10	6	Strong baseline awareness
Mindful consumption	11	7	Sustained across both groups
Resource stewardship	6	8	Rises in the fifth (systemic framing)
Community spillover	5	7	Increases with maturity/agency
Practice-before-preach	3	8	Sharp rise in the fifth (professional identity)
Pedagogical integration	2	7	Emerges strongly in the 5th
Affordability constraints	9	3	Primarily a junior concern
Institutional gaps	4	8	Seniors focus on systems
Cultural/peer drag	8	4	Heavier in shared living contexts (3rd)
Consistency difficulty	10	3	Habit formation challenge early

Note: The counts indicate the number of distinct speakers who mention the sub-theme at least once. They reflect relative prominence rather than the results of inferential statistics.

Analysing the pattern: The shift from the 3rd to the 5th stage moves from focusing on self-regulation (such as health and impulse control) to emphasising role responsibility and systems thinking (including resource stewardship and pedagogical integration).

Theme co-occurrence (how ideas travel together)

Table 3. Co-occurrence matrix (theme pairs mentioned within the same turn/sequence)

	Awareness	Habits	Teacher identity	Barriers
Awareness	—	High	Medium	Medium
Habits	High	—	High (5th)	Medium
Teacher identity	Medium	High (5th)	—	Medium-High (institutional)
Barriers	Medium	Medium	Medium-High	—

Awareness and habits often occur together (reflection leading to action). In the 5th semester, the connection between habits and teacher identity strengthens, indicating a shift from personal practice to professional role modelling. Barriers are most frequently associated with

teacher identity in the 5th semester, reflecting systemic constraints experienced during practicum or advanced coursework.

Context–Mechanism–Outcome (CMO) configurations

Table 4. CMO patterns explaining how mindfulness yields outcomes

Context (C)	Mechanism (M)	Outcome (O)	Evidence
Consumerist peer culture (hostel/store offers)	Attentional pause + values salience	Reduced impulse buys; reuse/repair	S2, S3 (3rd)
Exam stress, time pressure	Embodied regulation (breath, noticing)	Calmer choices; lower junk food; fewer late-night orders	S1, S4 (3rd)
Campus without segregation facilities	Practice-before-preach intention clashes with institutional gaps	Frustration; ad-hoc solutions; advocacy attempts	S18, S20 (5th)
Family/community interactions	Community spillover via modelling and dialogue	Parents adopt cloth bags; peers try steel bottles	S13 (3rd), S22 (5th)

Key takeaway: Outcomes rely on contexts that enable mechanisms to activate. When institutions such as bins and refill stations are aligned, intentional actions can develop into consistent habits. Conversely, misaligned institutions cause motivation to encounter resistance.

Negative/deviant cases (crucial for credibility)

Table 5. Divergent/edge cases

Case	Statement	Why it matters
S5 (3rd)	“It is difficult to practice daily; sometimes I forget.”	Shows awareness, ≠ not an automatic habit. Emphasises the need for supportive habit structures.
S11 (3rd)	“Peer pressure is strong; it is easy to talk, hard to do.”	Highlights cultural influences; prevents over-idealising mindfulness outcomes.
S14 (3rd)	“Eco-products are costlier...”	Surface issues related to equity and affordability are crucial factors in policy development.
S20 (5th)	“No waste segregation options.”	Emphasises a structural mismatch by moving the focus from individual to institutional solutions.

These cases prevent overclaiming and direct attention to practical constraints.

Saturation, adequacy, and quality

- **Saturation:** Following two focus groups with 25 students, no new major themes arose; subsequent excerpts expanded on existing sub-themes instead of creating new categories—indicating that thematic saturation was achieved at the level necessary to address the research questions.
- **Credibility:** Double coding of a subset; negotiated consensus; thick quotes; negative cases.
- **Dependability/confirmability:** Audit trail (iterative codebook drafts, dated memos).

- **Transferability:** Contextual detail at the semester level within a teacher-education setting to assist readers in making judgments applicability.

Direct alignment to RQs (with tables)

- **RQ1 – Perceptions of mindfulness:** Theme 1 (Awareness). Tables A, B, C illustrate attentional pause, embodied regulation, and ecological aspects noticing.
- **RQ2 – Mindfulness - sustainable practices:** Theme 2 (Habits). Tables A, B, C, and D display data on carrying steel bottles, energy conservation, and tree planting spillover.
- **RQ3 – Semester differences:** The comparative matrix in Table B shows prevalence shifts, while Table C presents co-occurrence data regarding Habits and Teacher identity increases 5th).
- **RQ4 – Professional identity:** Theme 3; Tables A, B, C, D (practice before preach; pedagogical integration).
- **RQ5 – Barriers:** Theme 4; Tables A, B, C, and the deviant cases in Table E (comparing affordability and institutional gaps).

Integrative narrative (what changes from third → fifth?)

1. **Mindfulness as filter (3rd):** Students “think twice,” manage impulses, and become aware of ecological impacts—fostering personal control emphasis.
2. **Mindfulness as conduct (late 3rd/5th):** Reusing, conserving resources, and planting trees—these actions exemplify behavioral embodiment.
3. **Mindfulness as professional ethic (5th):** Practice before preaching, integrating in the classroom through role modelling and teaching methods.
4. **Shift in obstacles:** shift from personal factors (cost, peers, consistency) to systemic factors (facilities, segregation, campus norms).

Bottom line: Mindfulness acts as a bridge from self-regulation to developing sustainable habits, shaping teacher identity, and promoting sustainable living. To scale its impact, institutional design must support mindful intentions through measures like segregation, refill points, green procurement, and dedicated curricular time.

Practical, evidence-based recommendations (derived from analysis)

- Habit supports for juniors include visible prompts like bottle stations, commitment cards, and peer accountability micro-groups.
- For seniors, curriculum integration involves micro-teaching modules that combine a 2–3 minute mindfulness routine with a sustainability activity such as an audit or design challenge.
- Institutional facilitators include coloured segregation bins, refill taps, “bring-your-own” policies at canteens, and green ambassadors.
- An equity perspective is maintained through low-cost starter kits, such as cloth bags and subsidised steel bottles, to ensure affordability.

Objectives–Research Questions–Findings Alignment

Objectives	Research Questions (RQs)	Key Findings (Themes/Tables)
1. To explore perceptions of mindfulness among ITEP B.Com B.Ed students.	RQ1: How do students pursuing ITEP B.Com B.Ed perceive mindfulness in their daily routines and academic environment?	Theme 1: Awareness through Mindfulness — Students associated mindfulness with healthier eating (S1), thinking carefully before shopping (S2), and reducing plastic use (S3). (Table 1, Table 2)
2. To examine the role of mindfulness in influencing sustainable lifestyle practices.	RQ2: How do students relate mindfulness to sustainable practices like consumption, resource management, and ecological responsibility?	Theme 2: Sustainable Habits- Students practised carrying steel bottles, using cloth bags, conserving electricity (S16), and planting trees (S22). (Table 2)
3. To identify differences across semesters in understanding mindfulness and sustainability.	RQ3: How do the understanding and application of mindfulness for sustainable living differ between 3rd-semester and 5th-semester ITEP B.Com B.Ed students?	Table 3: Comparative Analysis- The 3rd semester focuses on personal habits and affordability challenges, while the 5th semester emphasises professional responsibility, systemic practices, and institutional barriers.
4. To explore how students envision mindfulness shaping their professional identity as teachers.	RQ4: How do students perceive the impact of mindfulness on developing their professional identities as future teachers and sustainability role models?	Theme 3: Teacher Identity and Role Modelling → Senior students emphasised that “Teachers cannot preach unless they practice sustainability” (S18). They connected teacher identity with mindfulness and pedagogy.
5. To identify challenges in adopting mindfulness-based sustainable practices.	RQ5: What challenges and barriers do students encounter when adopting mindfulness and sustainable practices across institutional, social, and economic settings?	Theme 4: Challenges and Barriers → Students mentioned affordability (S14), peer pressure (S9), and institutional constraints such as the absence of waste segregation (S20). These challenges shifted from individual issues to systemic obstacles.

FINDINGS

The thematic analysis of focus group interviews with B.Com.B.Ed. ITEP students revealed the following key findings:

1. Students became more thoughtful and deliberate in their decisions, such as cutting back on junk food, avoiding unnecessary shopping, and saving energy. This suggests that mindfulness improved their self-control and ecological awareness.
2. Mindfulness correlated with evident eco-friendly actions. Students reported using reusable bottles, cloth bags, planting trees, and reducing electricity use as intentional lifestyle choices.

3. Students in their final (5th semester) particularly highlighted the link between mindfulness and professional duty. They acknowledged that teachers need to practice sustainability first to teach it effectively, seeing themselves as future role models for eco-conscious behaviour.
4. Despite positive attitudes, students faced barriers. Junior students mentioned affordability and peer pressure, while seniors pointed out systemic issues like lack of institutional support and missing eco-friendly infrastructure.
5. A developmental trend was noticed: 3rd semester students mainly linked mindfulness to personal lifestyle habits, whereas 5th semester students incorporated mindfulness into their professional identity and teaching responsibilities..

DISCUSSION

The findings show that mindfulness significantly influences the development of sustainable attitudes and behaviors among pre-service teachers i.e. B.Com.B.Ed. ITEP students.

- The findings support Brown and Kasser's (2005) claim that mindfulness can decrease materialism and promote intentional living. Students' reflections on their consumption habits indicate that mindfulness functions as a mental filter, fostering eco-conscious decision-making.
- Consistent with Ericson et al. (2014), mindfulness was linked to visible pro-environmental actions such as reducing waste and conserving energy. This shift moves from merely being aware to actively practising sustainable behaviours, demonstrating how personal reflection fosters ecological responsibility.
- The strong focus by senior students on role modelling aligns with Tilbury's (2011) perspective that educators play a vital role in advancing sustainability education. Mindfulness helped students prepare not just for personal growth but also for their future roles as sustainability educators.
- Echoing Kassel et al. (2016), students pointed out personal barriers like cost and peer pressure, as well as systemic obstacles such as institutional infrastructure. This highlights the importance of institutional support systems to complement individual mindfulness practices.
- The differences observed between third- and fifth-semester students illustrate Shapiro, Brown, and Astin's (2011) assertion that mindfulness deepens through continued practice. While junior students viewed it as self-discipline, senior students associated it with professional ethics and pedagogy, showing a developmental progression within ITEP.

IMPLICATIONS

1. The study has several significant implications for teacher education, institutional practice, and policy development:
2. Mindfulness should be formally incorporated into teacher education curricula through workshops, reflective activities, and classroom practices.
3. Including sustainability modules within mindfulness training can strengthen the connection between personal awareness and ecological responsibility.
4. Universities should establish eco-supportive infrastructure such as waste segregation bins, reusable water stations, and sustainability clubs.

5. Institutions can demonstrate their commitment to sustainability by adopting green campus initiatives and integrating mindfulness-based sustainability campaigns.
6. The findings support the National Education Policy (NEP 2020), which highlights holistic, value-based, and sustainability-oriented teacher training.
7. Policymakers should consider requiring the integration of mindfulness and sustainability in all teacher education programs nationwide.
8. Long-term studies should examine how mindfulness impacts sustainability throughout all four years of ITEP.
9. Comparative research involving B.A.B.Ed., B.Sc.B.Ed, and B.Com.B.Ed. ITEP programmes can provide broader insights.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the links between mindfulness and sustainable living among the pre-service teachers i.e. B.Com.B.Ed. ITEP students. Results showed that mindfulness promotes awareness, intentionality, and eco-friendly habits, while also influencing the development of professional teacher identity and ecological consciousness responsibility.

A developmental shift was noted: third-semester students associated mindfulness with regulating their personal lifestyle, whereas fifth-semester students linked it to role modelling and pedagogical responsibility. This change demonstrates how mindfulness shifts from an individual practice to an aspect of professional ethics, highlighting its transformative role in teacher education.

However, issues like affordability, peer pressure, and insufficient institutional support were recognised, highlighting the necessity for systemic change in addition to personal mindfulness efforts.

In conclusion, mindfulness acts as a link between personal well-being and sustainable living, gradually extending into professional responsibility within teacher education. By incorporating mindfulness-based sustainability into teacher education programmes like ITEP programmes, future teachers can be empowered to serve as role models, supporting the broader goals of NEP 2020 and the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

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