

## Research Article

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## How do Gen Z Teachers Develop Their Intrapersonal Skills? Evidence from Indonesia

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**Abstract**

**Background/purpose.** Generation Z (Gen Z) teachers often face problems related to low intrapersonal skills in the workplace. Although empirical evidence shows how important intrapersonal skills are in supporting Gen Z teachers, there is still limited research on the intrapersonal problems faced by these teachers. Therefore, this research aimed to explore the intrapersonal skill problems often faced by Gen Z teachers as well as ways to solve these problems.

**Materials/methods.** Adopting a qualitative research method, a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was conducted to explore the experiences and views of Gen Z teachers regarding intrapersonal skills. Data were collected from 50 teachers from Bima City and Regency, West Nusa Tenggara Province, Indonesia, between the ages of 23 and 28. The data were analyzed using thematic data analysis.

**Results.** The results showed that Gen Z teachers often face problems such as work pressure, emotional regulation, and negative self-image. Strategies adopted for improving intrapersonal skills included mindfulness, self-reflection, seeking feedback, and maintaining a balance in life.

**Conclusion.** This research evaluated the problems faced by Gen Z teachers and appropriate strategies developed to solve them, which indicated the importance of emotional support and intrapersonal skills. Therefore, schools need to provide spaces and training that support the development of these skills so that teachers can be more effective in facing challenges and improving professionalism. The findings offer a strong framework for developing more comprehensive teacher training programs, which focus not only on technical skills but also on developing intrapersonal skills crucial in enhancing learning.

## 1. Introduction

Generation Z (Gen Z) is the newest generation, comprising individuals familiar with digital technology, the internet, and social media at a young age. It has entered the workforce since 2017 (Barhate & Dirani, 2022). There are currently four different generations coexisting in the workforce, namely Baby Boomers, Generation X, Millennials, and Gen Z, the first of a kind in the history of the modern workforce (Magano et al., 2020). With four different generations, value conflicts increased in organizations regarding preferences in learning styles, beliefs, and communication (Solaja & Ogunola, 2016). Additionally, these organizations need to understand all relevant aspects and dynamics of the workplace (Perilus, 2020). As the youngest group in the workforce, Gen Z is often referred to as the digital generation or digital natives (Maloni et al., 2019). Growing up in the digital communication era (Djafarova & Bowes, 2021), they have developed unique attributes (Parker & Igielnik, 2020). Compared to previous generations, this group is more fortunate to get older in a relatively conducive environment with a stable economy, despite the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, which presented new challenges (Parker & Igielnik, 2020).

Gen Z has been considered to be less resilient due to spending too much time in the digital world (Harari et al., 2023; Ludwig et al., 2020), suffering high levels of depression and anxiety, as well as needing support (Schroth, 2019). According to Parker and Igielnik (2020), this group spends less time in direct face-to-face interaction and experiences high levels of depression. The unrealistic work expectations prompted low levels of commitment and high turnover rates (Schroth, 2019). This problem was complicated by a set of unwritten expectations about work relationships that greatly influenced attitudes, feelings, and behaviors (Sherman & Morley, 2015). Therefore, aside from understanding how best to manage these individuals in the workplace, organizations are required to identify the unique characteristics that affect the distinctive experiences. The ability to apprehend distinct behaviors and needs in the workplace led to better placement, motivation, and formulation of an ideal framework (Schroth, 2019).

The teaching profession is in great demand from Gen Z. For example, in Indonesia, approximately 6.5% of teachers are within this age range, which is expected to increase in the future. The employment of this group has led to a thorough evaluation of the entire process. In addition, the teaching profession is characterized by high levels of burnout and turnover (Suyatno et al., 2021), with many teachers experiencing excessive workloads, stress, and depression. A fundamental problem frequently encountered is having low intrapersonal skills, which refer to the self-management of behavior, emotions, and beliefs related to learning, and diminished self-regulation processes, including metacognition (Lyndgaard & Kanfer, 2024). Intrapersonal skills are grouped into three categories: (1) intellectual openness, (2) work ethic, and (3) positive core self-evaluation (Pellegrino, 2017), requiring an awareness of personal emotions, desires, thoughts, behaviors, and personality, as well as regulating, motivating, and continually improving oneself (Brundiers et al., 2021). The skills offer the ability to avoid personal health challenges and burnout in advancing sustainable transformation through self-care-oriented resilience (Redman & Wiek, 2021).

Previous research (Shorey et al., 2021) described the learning styles, preferences, and needs of Gen Z health students through a systematic literature review using six electronic databases, namely PubMed, Embase, CINAHL, PsycINFO, ProQuest, and Scopus. The research focused on (1) the attributes of Gen Z health students, (2) learning styles, (3) preferences and needs, and (4) teaching this group. The study showed that technology, campus resources, and self-care strategies should be carefully integrated and planned to ensure students' optimal and safe learning environment. Szymkowiak et al. (2021) stated that technology and the internet affected the preferred knowledge acquisition. The research was conducted on 498 Gen Z who actively used peer-to-peer online knowledge-sharing communities, and the results showed that this group preferred to learn through

mobile applications and video content rather than traditional forms. The students imitated teachers who integrated modern technology into the curriculum and effectively used it outside class hours to learn. Other preliminary research (Al-Adwan & Al-Debei, 2024) focused on the interest of this group in developing countries, including deciding whether to use metaverse technology in higher education. The application of structural equation modeling on data from 537 students showed that besides social influence, all other determinants had a significant and positive impact on the intention to adopt metaverse in higher education. Several research categorized Gen Z students; for example, Mihelič et al. (2023) focused on mobile cyberloafing, which refers to the use of mobile phones for non-learning purposes among students. Walinski et al. (2023) discussed learner-focused teaching methods and techniques addressing the characteristics of Gen Z students. Meanwhile, Hossain et al. (2023) examined the various restrictions that prevented students in Bangladesh from engaging in entrepreneurship.

Previous research analyzed the limited intrapersonal skills of Gen Z teachers, which led to difficulties in predicting personal behavior in the workplace (Barhate & Dirani, 2022). Therefore, the present research aimed to address this gap by exploring the issues associated with the intrapersonal skills of Gen Z teachers, including adopting relevant strategies for improvement. The results provided guidelines for organizations and practitioners to anticipate various intrapersonal problems of Gen Z teachers when carrying out assigned tasks in the workplace.

## **2. Methodology**

### **2.1. Research Design**

A qualitative method, Focus Group Discussion (FGD), was adopted to explore the experiences and views of Gen Z teachers regarding their intrapersonal skills. FGD motivated participants to interact actively, thereby enabling in-depth and accurate information. This method allowed participants to share personal experiences and strategies to overcome intrapersonal problems (Krueger & Casey, 2015).

### **2.2. Sample and Data Collection**

The participants comprised 50 Gen Z teachers from Bima City and Regency, West Nusa Tenggara Province, Indonesia. Furthermore, the selected participants met the following criteria: 1) Permanent (not honorary) teachers who teach in junior high schools, both public and private, in Bima City and Regency, 2) a maximum age range of 28 years, which is the oldest generation of Gen Z, 3) teachers of general subjects (language, mathematics, science, social studies, and several others, excluding religious, including physical and health education), and 4) willingness to volunteer. Based on these criteria, a team from the Bima Regency Education Offices assisted in the selection process. An email containing a description of the research, questions, and a guarantee that only information relevant to the topic would be required was sent. Prior to data collection, the participants reviewed and signed a consent form to partake in the group discussion forum, expressing their willingness to be recorded during the discussion. In addition, the participant demographics are shown in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Demographics of Participants.

|                              | Criteria      | Total |
|------------------------------|---------------|-------|
| Gender                       | Male          | 13    |
|                              | Female        | 37    |
| Age (years)                  | 23-25         | 9     |
|                              | 26-28         | 39    |
| Teaching experiences (years) | 1-3 years     | 32    |
|                              | 4-6 years     | 18    |
| Qualification                | Undergraduate | 44    |
|                              | Postgraduate  | 6     |
| Subjects taught              | Indonesian    | 17    |
|                              | English       | 15    |
|                              | Mathematics   | 8     |
|                              | Science       | 5     |
|                              | Informatics   | 3     |
|                              | Crafts        | 2     |
| School status                | State         | 42    |
|                              | Private       | 8     |

As shown in Table 1, the female participants dominated the males, with the oldest and youngest being 28 and 23 years old, respectively. In addition, this age range is included in the Gen Z group. Most teachers had one to three years of experience, and the majority were young. The majority of the teachers taught Indonesian and English, while the rest delivered mathematics, natural sciences, informatics, and crafts. Educational qualifications were dominated by 88% of undergraduates, and this was perceived as the minimum requirement to become a teacher in Indonesia. Meanwhile, the majority of schools were public schools, reaching 84%.

During the FGD, 50 participants were divided into 10 groups consisting of five people each. This categorization met the data saturation criteria stated in the research (Cooper & Fleisher, 2012). Prior to the FGD, the participants were verbally permitted to record the discussion process. The shortest and longest FGD detected with a digital recorder were conducted for 35 and 55 minutes, respectively. During each FGD session, the discussion was facilitated by ensuring that all participants had the opportunity to speak and share distinctive views. In addition, the group dynamics were also monitored to create an atmosphere that supports openness and comfort in sharing experiences. The diverse teacher backgrounds were expected to enrich the data obtained during the research (Bauml et al., 2020). During the FGD, a guideline developed based on relevant theory was used to guide the discussion. This comprised open-ended questions designed to explore various aspects of intrapersonal skills, including emotion regulation, self-reflection, and feedback seeking. The guideline helped to keep the discussion focused while providing flexibility for participants to explore themes naturally during the conversation. This ensured that the data obtained were relevant and useful in answering the questions (Creswell & Poth, 2016).

### **2.3. Data Analysis**

The data was analyzed using a thematic method commonly adopted in qualitative research to identify, evaluate, and report themes obtained (Braun et al., 2017). The analysis process was carried out systematically, starting from transcription of FGD recordings to data coding and finding evolving themes. Additionally, each theme was analyzed to identify the relationship between participant experiences and intrapersonal skills applied in teaching practices. The thematic analysis method

captured the complexity of experiences, providing deeper insights into the intrapersonal skill problems and strategies applied (Clarke & Braun, 2021). However, to ensure the codes and themes generated were valid during the data analysis process, each FGD was transcribed and coded independently. During the data analysis, discussions were conducted periodically, often weekly, to compare, review, and probe investigative insights, thereby increasing the accuracy of the findings. This led to three important themes, namely work pressure, emotional regulation, and positive self-image, used in answering the first research question and four others, such as mindfulness, self-reflection, seeking feedback, and maintaining a balance in life for the second research question.

### 3. Results

This research aimed to explore two important factors: first, the intrapersonal skill problems often faced in carrying out professional duties, and second, how these issues can be overcome. The results are shown in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Themes and Codes Generated During Data Analysis.

| Themes  | Codes                       | Extract data   |
|---|-----------------------------|--|
| Gen Z intrapersonal issues                          | Work pressure               | "Pressure from multiple tasks, deadlines, and huge responsibilities often led to stress."  |
|   | Emotional regulation        | "There are times when I am not fully aware of what is affecting my mood or behavior."  |
|   | Negative self-image         | "This led to a negative self-image, especially when expectations are not achieved, underestimated, lack support, and blamed even after trying my best."                        |
| Gen Z strategies for improving intrapersonal skills | Mindfulness                 | "Mindfulness helped improve the ability to be in the moment by enabling the teacher to become more aware of personal thoughts, feelings, and reactions in certain situations." |
|   | Self-reflection             | "There is a need to routinely take time to reflect and evaluate oneself through daily journaling, meditation, or simply observing thoughts and feelings daily."                |
|   | Looking for feedback        | "I seek feedback from closest friends to get a perspective of myself in different situations."   |
|   | Maintaining balance in life | "Engaging in fun activities such as recreation with family or friends, watching movies, cooking, or sharing similar experiences with other individuals enabled recovery."      |

Table 2 shows that the problems often faced were work pressure, excessive anxiety, and negative self-image. Meanwhile, the strategies adopted for improving intrapersonal skills included mindfulness, self-reflection, seeking feedback, and maintaining a balance in life.

#### **3.1. Problems of Gen Z Regarding Intrapersonal Skills**

##### **3.1.1. Work pressure**

The results of the data analysis showed that a prominent intrapersonal problem was work pressure. Most participants were stressed by the heavy workload, deadlines, administrative demands, ever-evolving lesson plans, and high expectations from the school. This pressure was compounded by having to keep up with new technologies and teaching methods, which added to the

complexity of educator roles. It was proven by the following P2's statement during the interview session:

Pressure from multiple tasks, deadlines, and huge responsibilities often leads to stress. The biggest challenge arises from the inability to manage stress properly, which impacts performance and productivity. In addition, stress causes these individuals to be less focused or impatient [P2].

Many participants reported being criticized by several parties, including colleagues and parents, which could affect their personal lives, leading to burnout and prolonged stress. Throughout interview sessions held, P2 stated that:

Teachers were often judged by the school, peers, or parents, and constructive criticism can occasionally be emotionally challenging. There were circumstances when I felt defensive or took the criticism too personally; however, accepting it was perceived as a way of improvement [P2].

In support of this result, P3, P7, and P9 also stated that when under continuous pressure, the ability to recognize personal emotions could be disturbed, resulting in the inability to realize calm and deep reflection [P3]. P7 reported having difficulty managing stress due to work pressure, personal problems, and challenging situations, leading to emotional and mental exhaustion. According to P9, a rather heavy workload, such as difficult-to-understand teaching administration tasks, often caused mental and emotional exhaustion. The work pressure was also felt by another teacher who found it difficult to implement certain school literacy activities, as reported by P5:

School literacy activities, which tested emotional resilience, involved difficulty managing students who were busy talking to one another and noisy. However, this situation helped to improve intrapersonal skills, aiding in learning to be more patient and always think positively [P5].

### **3.1.2. Emotional regulation**

Emotional regulation is recognizing, managing, and effectively controlling personal emotions. This includes how an individual copes with intense feelings such as anger, sadness, or anxiety, as well as expressing emotions in a way that is appropriate to the situation. Emotional regulation enables an individual to adjust certain reactions by reducing or increasing the intensity of emotions to conform with the objectives, social norms, or environmental demands. The results showed that emotional regulation was another problem that Gen Z teachers often encountered. Several participants expressed having difficulty managing individual emotions, especially when faced with situations that trigger excessive reactions. P2 stated that certain trivial situations were stressful, resulting in disproportionate reactions, namely excessive defensiveness or disappointment.

There are times when I am not fully aware of what is affecting my mood or behavior. This is often characterized by feelings of dissatisfaction without understanding the exact cause, leading to difficulty in taking appropriate steps to deal with the issue. There are also times when trivial situations feel emotionally overwhelming, leading to overreaction. For example, individuals tend to feel overly defensive or upset when faced with criticism or a slight mistake rather than responding calmly [P2].

Intrapersonal conflicts associated with thoughts, emotions, and values were perceived as obstacles affecting the ability to interact effectively with others [P5]. Lack of awareness also affected mood, while the pressure from high self-expectations worsened the inability to regulate emotions properly, impacting performance and mental well-being in the work environment.

Internal conflict, arising from personal thoughts, emotions, ideas, values, and tendencies, is often a problem concerning intrapersonal skills. This leads to the inability to control emotions and manage reactions towards others [P5].



Self-expectations were also perceived as a source of pressure because several participants admitted to setting high standards, leading to feelings of failure when results did not meet expectations [P2]: “This pressure negatively impacted my mental well-being and ability to focus on imminent tasks.” P7 stated that excessive anxiety related to future or uncertain situations could be a barrier to maintaining mental balance and completing tasks effectively. Some participants also reported that the expectations of other individuals were also regarded as a problem. According to P9:

I often had high expectations of students and felt disappointed when the expected results were not achieved. This led to frustration because reality did not always match the set expectations. When carrying out learning practices in the classroom, my expectations were too high for those taught, and the students ended up doing the direct opposite of what was taught [P9].

P2 stated that occasionally, an individual was forced to set high expectations, leading to pressure and feelings of failure due to inappropriate results. Furthermore, results from the interviews showed that anxiety and lack of self-confidence were part of the emotional regulation issues faced. P7 stated that excessive anxiety, especially when thinking about the future or facing uncertain situations, affected mental well-being. This anxiety often interfered with focus and productivity in completing existing tasks. In addition, an increased lack of self-confidence was perceived as a significant emotional challenge. “Excessive anxiety due to thinking about the future or facing uncertain situations affects mental well-being and hindered focus” [P7]. Another participant [P12] was worried about demands that might exceed personal abilities, thereby reluctantly taking on greater responsibilities or trying new things. Lack of confidence worsened anxiety, leading to a fear of failure, which overall affected the performance and well-being of educators.

I lacked the confidence to carry out important tasks or to hold important positions in the service institution. I was worried my superiors might make excessive demands. I am still unsure about my abilities and not brave enough to try new things [P12].

### **3.1.3. Negative self-image**

The results of data analysis showed that intrapersonal skills related to negative self-image were among the complex problems Gen Z teachers face. Several participants expressed disappointment when expectations were unmet, significantly when adequate efforts were underestimated, not supported, or even blamed. This led to a negative self-image, especially when expectations were not achieved, were underestimated, lacked support, and was blamed even after trying my best [P3]. In addition, several participants admitted to being compared to other teachers, often resulting in low self-confidence in the teaching process. This social comparison interfered with comfort, causing dissatisfaction and negatively affecting personal views of abilities and potential. Comparing oneself to others led to uncomfortable feelings and dissatisfaction [P9].

## **3.2. Strategies of Gen Z teachers for Improving Intrapersonal Skills**

### **3.2.1. Mindfulness**

The results of the data analysis showed that a specific strategy adopted to improve intrapersonal skills was mindfulness. This practice helped Gen Z to be aware of personal thoughts, feelings, and reactions arising from various situations, enabling better management of emotions and wise responses to situations. During the interview, P2 stated that:

Mindfulness helps improve the ability to be in the moment by enabling the teacher to become more aware of personal thoughts, feelings, and reactions in certain situations. This also aids an individual in being emotionally in control and responding wisely to situations [P2].

Similar to P2, P7 added that mindfulness and meditation were practices used to increase self-awareness, helping in being in the moment, including reducing stress levels. In addition, these practices also contributed to improving overall mental well-being.

Mindfulness and meditation help me be more present and aware of the moment, reduce stress levels, and improve mental well-being. I engage in meditation and mindfulness exercises to be more aware of my thoughts and emotions. This certainly helps to increase self-awareness and the ability to manage stress effectively [P7].

P7 outlined the importance of taking time to reflect on experiences and feelings, stating that it greatly helped in understanding oneself and identifying areas that need improvement for better development. Therefore, mindfulness and meditation are perceived as essential tools for managing stress, increasing self-awareness, and supporting the improvement of intrapersonal skills.

### **3.2.2. Self-reflection**

The interview session results showed that self-reflection was another strategy used to improve intrapersonal skills. Several participants stated that busy daily activities led to difficulties affecting reflection. This habit was considered important in terms of evaluating actions and identifying areas that need improvement. P2 stated regularly taking time to reflect through daily journaling, meditation, or simply observing personal thoughts and feelings. Self-reflection helped in understanding emotions, motivations, and thought patterns, ensuring that these actions were in line with the values upheld.

The daily busy schedule occasionally makes it difficult to reflect, evaluate assigned tasks, and identify areas for improvement. As a result, bad habits are continuously exhibited due to a lack of opportunities to reassess actions. There is a need to routinely take time to reflect and evaluate oneself through daily journaling, meditation, or simply observing thoughts and feelings daily. Reflection leads to a better understanding of oneself, including emotions, motivations, and thought patterns. It inculcates the habit of asking questions about life objectives, values, and beliefs. This always helps to check the direction, ascertaining whether personal actions conform with the values upheld [P2].

Another participant [P5] stated that reflection enabled the understanding of personal desires without being influenced by others, including finding the appropriate solution by evaluating the source of the problem faced.

I often take time to reflect on what has been taught, discover relevant needs, and understand myself without being influenced by others. Additionally, I decided to solve the problem by identifying the error or source of the problem, including finding the right solution [P5].

P14 stated that reflection and religious belief helped view actions positively. This depended on the belief that the good deeds would not be in vain. The participant sincerely executed assigned tasks and was free from disappointment. Self-reflection through personal evaluation and spiritual beliefs is an important strategy for improving self-understanding and intrapersonal growth.

I often reflect on religious beliefs to determine right and wrong whenever I act. Therefore, any act performed sincerely would not be in vain, and God definitely rewards good deeds. This helped me not to feel disappointed about any executed tasks, and there was no reason not to perform effectively [P14].

### **3.2.3. Looking for feedback**

The results of the data analysis showed that intrapersonal skills were improved by seeking feedback. Several participants stated the importance of gaining external perspectives to understand the views of others in various situations. P2 actively obtained feedback from closest friends or peers, enabling the recognition of aspects not aware of by the concerned individual.



I seek feedback from my closest friends to get a perspective of myself in different situations. This helped me view aspects of myself that I never knew existed [P2].

P7 stated that receiving feedback from trusted individuals regarding attitudes and behaviors provided a new perspective that was useful in self-development. This participant also felt that the feedback helped enhance areas that needed improvement.

Receiving feedback from others or someone about my attitude and behavior provided the following impact: new perspectives, which helped in self-development. I receive feedback from trusted individuals about my behavior and attitude [P7].

Discussion with colleagues is also an essential strategy, as reported by another participant [P9], where sharing experiences and getting feedback provide valuable insights for professional improvement. Furthermore, this feedback resulted in a better understanding of the teachers in social and interpersonal contexts, using the tool for growth and self-improvement. Discussion with colleagues, sharing experiences, and getting feedback from colleagues led to significant personal improvement [P9].

### ***3.2.4. Maintaining balance in life***

Data analysis showed that intrapersonal skills were improved by maintaining a work-life balance. Several participants explained that engaging in fun and rewarding activities outside of work helped them maintain emotional and mental balance. According to P13, participating in recreational activities, such as traveling with family or friends, watching movies, cooking, or sharing experiences with others in similar situations, helped recover from negative feelings.

Engaging in fun activities such as recreation with family or friends, watching movies, cooking, or sharing similar experiences with other individuals enabled the recovery process [P13].

Another participant [P9] outlined the importance of pursuing hobbies as a way to maintain emotional balance and restore focus. In addition, developing interests and hobbies also provided valuable life experiences, enriching these individuals' intra-personally. Maintaining a balance in life through activities outside of work relieves stress, restores energy, and improves the ability to understand and manage one another.

I enjoy engaging in hobbies to maintain emotional balance and restore feelings. Moreover, these hobbies or interests aided in increasing life experiences [P9].

## **4. Discussion**

This research aimed to explore Gen Z teachers' problems concerning intrapersonal skills and strategies adopted to improve these skills. The results of the data analysis showed that the problems encountered by Gen Z teachers include work pressure, emotional regulation, and negative self-image—meanwhile, the adopted strategies comprised mindfulness, self-reflection, seeking feedback, and maintaining balance. The results were exceptional due to the specific focus on Gen Z teachers, who are considered the youngest generation in the workforce and the first to fully grow in the digital era.

### ***4.1. Intrapersonal problems: Job stress, emotional regulation, and negative self-image***

The Gen Z teachers often faced problems related to work pressure, emotional regulation, and negative self-image. As a generation born and raised in the digital era, this group is under pressure to meet high expectations from both external and internal parties. Previous research showed that many Gen Z teachers find it difficult to balance work demands and productivity with personal lives (Demirbilek & Keser, 2022). This led to feelings of being overwhelmed and chronic stress that hurt their mental health and ability to maintain emotional balance at work. The condition was also

worsened by pressure from social media, where many individuals often compared themselves to colleagues or public figures, thereby intensifying negative self-image (Siagian & Yuliana, 2023).

Emotional regulation was another problem that impacted mental well-being and teaching effectiveness. Previous research reported that teachers unable to manage personal emotions effectively tended to experience stress and burnout, which affected the quality of teaching and interactions with students (Bier et al., 2021). Gen Z teachers, often exposed to high demands in rapidly changing educational environments, face additional challenges in controlling emotional reactions to difficult situations, such as criticism or failure to meet certain expectations (Demirbilek & Keser, 2022). This is worsened by excessive anxiety and uncertainty about the future, resulting in the inability to function effectively in diverse roles as teachers. Therefore, poor emotional regulation skills affect teachers' mental health, including student learning experiences. This suggested a more systematic method to support the development of Gen Z teachers' intrapersonal skills.

Excessive anxiety eventually led to feelings of insecurity and low self-esteem, thereby affecting self-image. Previous research suggested that Gen Z teachers had high expectations and were less flexible in dealing with failure or less-than-ideal situations, which caused negative feelings to deepen (Rahmawati et al., 2024). The inability to manage stress and anxiety significantly damages mental health, weakening the teaching quality and the relationships with students and colleagues. The results of the current study supported prior evidence, which stated that this group spent excessive time in the digital space and were less resilient (Harari et al., 2023; Ludwig et al., 2020) to high levels of depression and anxiety; therefore, they needed to be supported (Schroth, 2019). Gen Z teachers also have unrealistic work expectations, prompting low levels of commitment (Yeap & Thien, 2021) and high turnover rates (Schroth, 2019).

#### ***4. 2. Strategies for Improving Intrapersonal Skills: Mindfulness, Self-Reflection, Seeking Feedback, and Maintaining Balance***

Mindfulness was the most frequently adopted strategy to improve intrapersonal skills, such as self-awareness, emotional regulation, and empathy. Characterized by a high level of attachment to technology, mindfulness enables this group to stay focused and emotionally active in daily interactions with students (Katz, 2019). Previous research stated that this skill reduced stress, improved the quality of teacher-student relationships, and thereby strengthened teachers' intrapersonal skills. The practice enables a better understanding of oneself, responding to situations wisely, and being perceived as a role model for students to develop mental and emotional well-being (de Carvalho et al., 2021).

Mindfulness improved intrapersonal skills, creating a more positive and inclusive learning environment. Moreover, being aware of personal emotions and responses enabled teachers to be more patient, open-minded, and empathetic in dealing with classroom challenges. Recent research has reported that the regular practice of mindfulness enabled better management of classroom dynamics, especially when dealing with students with different needs (Cheng et al., 2022). The increased practice of mindfulness and empathy enabled the creation of a safer and more comfortable space that supported student social-emotional development. This, in turn, strengthened intrapersonal skills as teachers continued to learn from interactions with students in a mindful context.

The current research reported that intrapersonal skills were improved through self-reflection strategies, which allowed a better understanding of thoughts, feelings, and actions in both professional and personal contexts. Self-reflection helped teachers to critically evaluate personal performance in the classroom, identify areas for improvement, and celebrate minor accomplishments that may have been overlooked. According to recent research, regular self-

reflection through journaling, discussions with mentors (Fúzi et al., 2024), or self-evaluation deepens self-awareness, strengthening the ability to manage emotions and deal with challenges (London et al., 2023). The recognition of personal strengths and weaknesses aids in the adoption of more effective strategies for coping with stress and developing a more positive self-image, including improving interpersonal relationships in the workplace (Suyatno et al., 2019).

Feedback from colleagues, mentors, and close friends was another strategy adopted by the participants. By being open to feedback, this group objectively identified personal strengths and weaknesses, which helped self-development. External feedback offered new perspectives, enabling performance evaluation more critically and making improvements where necessary (Chou & Zou, 2020). Seeking feedback regularly increased self-awareness and strengthened interpersonal relationships, depicting humility and commitment to continuous learning (Gnepp et al., 2020; Rachmawati & Suyatno, 2021). This is essential for teachers in a highly competitive and dynamic era, where the ability to adapt and grow through learning from others is a crucial intrapersonal skill.

Maintaining a work-life balance is an important strategy mentioned by the participants. In facing intense work demands and massive technological development, there is a need to consciously manage time and energy to avoid burnout (Maslach & Leiter, 2022). The implementation of strategies such as effective time management, setting healthy boundaries between work and personal life, and engaging in activities that support mental health reduce stress while increasing self-awareness (Dye et al., 2020). Maintaining a work-life balance allowed teachers to be emotionally present in every situation, strengthening empathy, self-control, and the ability to face challenges wisely (Gonzales, 2022). Therefore, work-life balance supports mental and physical health, enriching overall intrapersonal skills.

## 5. Conclusion

In conclusion, this research stated that Gen Z teachers suffered from the following intrapersonal issues: work pressure, emotional regulation, and negative self-image. Pressure from increasingly complex professional demands, such as classroom management and environmental expectations, often caused stress that negatively impacted emotional well-being. In addition, excessive anxiety about future career and teaching abilities also worsened the situation, leading to a lack of confidence and the inability to meet expectations. Social pressure from digital media also impaired self-image, resulting in feelings of incompetency in carrying out their role as teachers. In order to overcome these intrapersonal issues, Gen Z teachers adopted several self-development strategies. Mindfulness activities helped manage emotions and stress effectively, while self-reflection enabled thorough evaluation and understanding. Actively seeking feedback was also adopted to gain external insight that aided with self-improvement. Furthermore, maintaining a work-life balance prevented burnout and supported adequate mental health. Implementing these strategies improved intrapersonal skills, supporting professionalism in assigned duties.

## 6. Suggestion

The findings suggested that future research needs to focus on the long-term impact of the following strategies: mindfulness and self-reflection on teaching quality and well-being. These should include an interdisciplinary method combining aspects of psychology, educational technology, and school policies to create an environment that supports the mental well-being of teachers.

The current research findings provided a solid basis for developing more comprehensive teacher training programs focusing on technical and intrapersonal skills that affect professionalism in the workplace. Teacher training needs to be all-inclusive, especially involving the design of mindfulness-oriented modules and opportunities to get feedback from colleagues, considering that these two methods are widely adopted by Gen Z teachers to improve intrapersonal skills. The current research

provided important insights into Gen Z teachers' challenges regarding intrapersonal skills and the strategies adopted for improving these skills.

The current study contributed significantly to developing a better understanding of Gen Z teachers' intrapersonal skills. However, certain limitations were observed, including the inability to analyze the lack of diversity in the cultural and institutional contexts. As a result, the findings may not fully represent Gen Z teachers across different countries or school types. Moreover, the qualitative method adopted was unable to describe the intrapersonal skill problems faced by primary school teachers in a larger area.

## Declarations

**Author Contributions.** Conceptualization, S.S., D.I.P., and W.W.; methodology, S.S., D.I.P., W.W., D.H., and R.N. validation, S.S., D.I.P., W.W., and H.H.; formal analysis, S.S., D.I.P., and R.N.; investigation, S.S., D.I.P., D.H., and H.H.; resources S.S., D.I.P., and W.W.; data curation, S.S., D.I.P., and W.W.; writing—original draft preparation, S.S., D.I.P., and W.W.; writing—review and editing, S.S., D.I.P., D.H., and R.N.; visualization, S.S.; supervision, S.S. and W.W.; project administration S.S., D.I.P., and W.W.; funding acquisition, S.S., D.I.P. and W.W. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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**Ethical Approval.**

**Data Availability Statement.** Data used in this research is confidential and thus could not be shared by third parties.

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