# Dhamma Music and the MWL Model for Promoting Children's Emotional Well-Being at the Buddhamahametta Foundation

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## Abstract

This research article examines the role of Dhamma music and the Mindfulness, Wisdom, and Loving-Kindness (MWL) model in promoting children's emotional well-being at the Buddhamahametta Foundation. The study has three objectives: 1) to examine the role of Dhamma music in enhancing children's meditation engagement; second, 2) to analyze Buddhist peaceful means integrated into the MWL model for promoting children's emotional well-being; and 3) to evaluate the effectiveness of the MWL model with Dhamma music in improving children's emotional well-being. The study employed a mixed-methods research design, combining documentary analysis, focus group discussion with meditation instructors, a pre-test and post-test evaluation using the WHO-5 Well-Being Index, and follow-up interviews with children after home-based practice.

The findings reveal that Dhamma music functions as more than a background auditory aid; it serves as a pedagogical and contemplative tool that strengthens attention, relaxation, emotional regulation, and sustained engagement in meditation. The study also shows that Buddhist peaceful means, particularly mindfulness, loving-kindness, wisdom, gratitude, and ethical reflection, support children's emotional awareness, prosocial behavior, compassion, and inner calm. Quantitative findings from the WHO-5 Well-Being Index indicate improved children's well-being after participating in the MWL meditation course, while qualitative findings show better sleep quality, reduced anxiety, increased mindfulness, and greater motivation to continue meditating at home.

The article concludes that the MWL model with Dhamma music offers a culturally rooted and developmentally appropriate framework for promoting children's emotional resilience, ethical awareness, and holistic well-being. The study contributes to Buddhist education, child mindfulness training, and applied

Buddhist peaceful means by demonstrating how music-enhanced meditation can support children's emotional and spiritual development.

**Keywords:** Dhamma music; MWL model; Mindfulness; Loving-kindness; Children's emotional well-being; Buddhamahametta Foundation

## Introduction

Children today are growing up in a rapidly changing social, educational, and technological environment. The expansion of digital media, academic competition, reduced opportunities for play, and increased exposure to online content have created new challenges for children's emotional development. Children aged 6 to 12 are especially sensitive to these changes because they are developing attention, self-regulation, social awareness, and emotional resilience. Nidhan (2024) observes that Generation Z and Generation Alpha experience distinct learning and emotional challenges amid rapid technological transformation. Similarly, Goldstein (2012) emphasizes that play, creativity, and balanced social interaction remain essential for children's healthy development, yet modern children often have fewer opportunities for natural emotional expression and restorative activities.

Within this context, mindfulness-based interventions have gained increasing attention as supportive tools for children's emotional well-being. Studies suggest that mindfulness can enhance emotional regulation, self-awareness, attention, and resilience among children and preadolescents (Kander et al., 2024; Shah & Gupta, 2022). Mindfulness practices can help children observe their feelings, calm their bodies, and respond to stress with greater awareness rather than an impulsive reaction. However, children often require developmentally appropriate methods that are engaging, sensory-based, and emotionally meaningful. Meditation practices designed for adults may not always sustain children's attention unless adapted through music, movement, storytelling, or guided imagery.

Dhamma music offers a promising way to support children's meditation practice. Music can create a calm atmosphere, reduce restlessness, support rhythmic breathing, and help children enter meditation with greater ease. Delport and Auerbach (2020) argue that music activities can support the development of mindfulness in children, while Moret Puig et al. (2016) highlight the

interdisciplinary relationship between music and mindfulness in promoting concentration, emotional regulation, and well-being. In Buddhist contexts, Dhamma music can also communicate ethical and spiritual values such as loving-kindness, gratitude, compassion, and inner peace in a form that children can easily experience.

The Buddhamahametta Foundation provides an important context for examining this integration of Buddhist practice, children's meditation, and Dhamma music. The Foundation promotes Buddhist education, mindfulness, loving-kindness, peace, and holistic well-being. Its Mindfulness, Wisdom, and Loving-Kindness (MWL) model combines mindfulness practice, Buddhist ethical reflection, loving-kindness meditation, and Dhamma music to cultivate emotional balance and inner resilience among children. Previous research on the MWL program has shown that mindfulness and compassion-based practices can enhance emotional warmth, joy, empathy, and psychological well-being among practitioners (Jiwattanasuk et al., 2025).

Despite growing interest in mindfulness for children, a research gap remains regarding the specific role of Dhamma music in Buddhist child meditation programs. Existing studies have examined mindfulness-based interventions and music-assisted learning, but fewer have evaluated how Dhamma music can be integrated into a structured Buddhist model to support children's emotional well-being. Therefore, this study investigates Dhamma Music and the MWL Model for Promoting Children's Emotional Well-Being at the Buddhamahametta Foundation. The study aims to examine the role of Dhamma music in children's engagement in meditation, analyze the peaceful means within the MWL model, and evaluate the model's effectiveness in improving children's emotional well-being.

## Research Objectives

1. To examine the role of Dhamma music in enhancing children's meditation engagement at the Buddhamahametta Foundation.
2. To analyze Buddhist peaceful means integrated into the Mindfulness, Wisdom, and Loving-Kindness model for promoting children's emotional well-being.
3. To evaluate the effectiveness of the Mindfulness, Wisdom, and Loving-Kindness model with Dhamma music in improving children's emotional well-being.

## Literature review

**Mindfulness-Loving kindness meditation (MWL) of the Buddhamahametta Foundation**.

Jiwattanasuk et al. (2025) formulated the culturally inclusive Mindfulness, Wisdom, and Loving-Kindness (MWL) program, which incorporates loving-kindness meditation to enhance psychological well-being at Buddhamahametta Foundation. Participants indicated heightened feelings of emotional warmth and joy, thereby substantiating its psychological advantages. The research underscores the versatility of mindfulness- and compassion-oriented practices across diverse cultural and linguistic contexts, illustrating their capacity to mitigate mental health issues by fostering greater empathy, inclusivity, and resilience. By tailoring practices to align with community needs, the MWL program enhances accessibility and contributes to emotional resilience, intercultural understanding, and overall psychological well-being.

**Concepts and Theories of Dhamma Music in Children's Meditation**.

The developmental framework for children's meditation presents a holistic model that integrates cognitive, emotional, and spiritual development through contemplative practices. Research (Shah & Gupta, 2022) supports the view that meditation, particularly mindfulness, can significantly enhance children's emotional regulation, executive function, and spiritual awareness, promoting resilience and overall well-being. Pre-adolescents are especially receptive to mindfulness training, making this a critical developmental period for intervention. Structured programs have been shown to improve attention, memory, and self-regulation, and are particularly beneficial for children from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds. The integration of mindfulness into family routines through a two-generation approach further strengthens outcomes, fostering behavioral change and mental health improvements across generations. Qualitative studies (Roeser, 2019)reveal that children often apply mindfulness reactively during emotional distress, using techniques that promote present-moment awareness, emotional detachment, and thoughtful decision-making. A supportive educational environment is essential for sustaining practice, though barriers such as noise and social discomfort must be addressed. Thus, the implementation of mindfulness in schools must prioritize quiet, inclusive spaces and cultivate a culture of acceptance to ensure children's consistent and meaningful engagement in meditation practices.

The investigation by Dajon et al. (2023) affirms the feasibility and efficacy of mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs) for children, particularly those in vulnerable or high-stress environments. Research demonstrates that MBIs can be effectively integrated into institutional settings, with skilled practitioners fostering meaningful engagement even amidst contextual constraints. Central to this success is interdisciplinary collaboration, which allows for the customization of interventions to meet the specific emotional and psychological needs of children. MBIs were found to significantly improve emotional awareness, positive affect, and resilience, particularly in children aged 10–12, while younger children benefited primarily in the area of emotional awareness.

Comparative findings (Pickerell et al.,2023) between MBIs and cognitive behavioral interventions (CBIs) suggest that while CBIs reduce observable behavioral issues, they may fall short in addressing internal emotional states such as anxiety and depression. In contrast, MBIs foster self-awareness, empathy, and compassion, with documented spillover effects that extend to peer relationships and family dynamics. Notably, children exposed to structured mindfulness training often reported a willingness to share mindfulness techniques with their families, reinforcing the social and communal impact of these practices.

Aligned with Piaget's (1971) stages of cognitive development, children aged 6–12 are cognitively capable of engaging with mindfulness practices, such as breath awareness and visualization. Techniques like yoga, guided meditation, and breathing exercises not only support emotional regulation but also improve attention, memory, posture, and adaptability. These findings underscore the importance of integrating developmentally appropriate mindfulness strategies into educational and therapeutic frameworks to support the holistic development of children, particularly those at risk of emotional and academic challenges.

This investigation of Moret Puig et al. (2016) illuminates the strong synergy between musical methodologies and mindfulness strategies, emphasizing their shared goal of enhancing concentration, emotional regulation, and overall well-being. Analysis of educational frameworks that incorporate mindfulness reveals their positive effects on mental health and academic performance, and supports the integration of musical components to create more engaging learning environments. The study by Loo (2018) demonstrates that melodic and harmonious musical elements, as well as natural sounds, not only improve emotional states and reduce stress during mindfulness exercises but also increase session attendance and participant motivation. This suggests that pleasant

auditory stimuli foster tranquility, focus, and sustained engagement in mindfulness practices.

Moreover, mindful listening practices, particularly in elementary educational settings, have been shown to bolster empathy, emotional intelligence, communication skills, and interpersonal relationships (Fortune & Barksdale, 2023). Children participating in these practices develop a greater capacity for self-expression and social understanding, which are vital for navigating classroom dynamics and broader social contexts. By embedding mindful listening into school curricula, educators can enhance students' academic involvement, emotional resilience, and social competence, ultimately cultivating compassionate, attentive, and inclusive classroom environments. These findings affirm that music, when thoughtfully integrated with mindfulness, can serve as a powerful and developmentally appropriate tool for promoting holistic growth in children.

The integration of Dhamma music into children's mindfulness programs represents a growing global movement aimed at fostering emotional well-being, self-awareness, and compassion. Across diverse cultural contexts, several prominent institutions have implemented music-enhanced mindfulness practices to enrich children's meditative experiences and support holistic development.

At Plum Village in France, founded by Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh, mindfulness and loving-kindness (metta) are taught through programs that combine calming Dhamma music with guided meditation, helping children cultivate emotional awareness, empathy, and resilience in a nurturing environment (Singh & Dhir, 2022).

Similarly, the Green School in Bali incorporates instrumental music into mindfulness sessions, creating a reflective space where children develop emotional intelligence and personal growth. The soothing auditory atmosphere enhances their ability to focus and relax, reinforcing the principles of mindfulness and compassion (Burke, 2010).

In Taiwan, Dharma Drum Mountain (DDM) promotes mindfulness and metta through musically accompanied meditation workshops for children. These programs emphasize emotional regulation and social responsibility, helping children internalize Buddhist values through immersive and engaging sensory experiences (Wang, 2020).

Karma Triyana Dharmachakra (KTD) in New York employs Tibetan music during loving-kindness meditations, offering young learners a serene setting to build compassion and a sense of connectedness. Their approach blends

traditional Buddhist teachings with modern pedagogical strategies, equipping children with lifelong emotional skills (Mason et al., 2020).

At the Omega Institute, mindfulness retreats for children include guided meditations paired with calming melodies. These experiences deepen emotional bonds and cultivate a supportive community, promoting self-awareness, compassion, and relational skills essential for navigating social and emotional challenges (Duncan & McIntyre, 2020).

Together, these global examples affirm the transformative potential of combining music with mindfulness and loving-kindness practices. This integrative approach provides children with meaningful tools to develop emotional resilience, empathy, and a deep connection to themselves and others, reinforcing the importance of holistic education rooted in spiritual and emotional well-being.

### Buddhist Peaceful Means and the MWL Model

Buddhist peaceful means include mindfulness (sati), loving-kindness (mettā), wisdom (paññā), gratitude (kataññū), ethical conduct, and non-harming. The Five Precepts provide a moral foundation for children by encouraging honesty, respect, self-control, and responsibility (AN 8.39). Gratitude, as emphasized in the Maṅgala Sutta and the Kataññu Suttas, helps children develop humility, respect for caregivers, and prosocial awareness (Khp. 5; AN 2.31–32).

The MWL model integrates mindfulness, wisdom, and loving-kindness into a structured meditation framework for children. When combined with Dhamma music, this model becomes more accessible, engaging, and emotionally resonant. Music supports attention and relaxation; mindfulness supports self-awareness; wisdom supports ethical reflection; and loving-kindness supports compassion and emotional connection. Therefore, the literature supports the view that the MWL model, with Dhamma music, can serve as a culturally rooted and developmentally appropriate approach to promoting children's emotional well-being.

## Conceptual Frameworks

This research undertakes a comprehensive review of the literature on mindfulness and loving-kindness meditation for children, and explores Buddhist principles of peace to inform the development of a specialized Mindfulness, Wisdom, and Loving-Kindness (MWL) curriculum at the Buddhamahametta

Foundation. The goal is to design a structured, child-centered program that integrates mindfulness and loving-kindness practices rooted in Buddhist teachings, with its effectiveness evaluated in terms of children's well-being, emotional regulation, prosocial behavior, and psychological resilience.

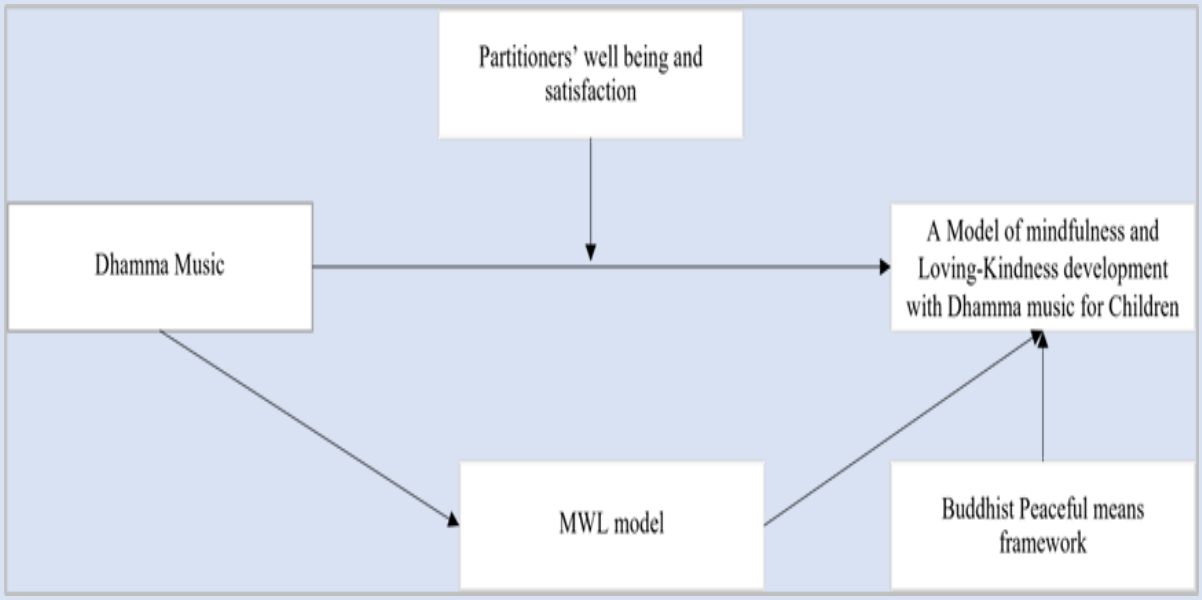



**Figure 1**: Conceptual Frameworks

## Research Methodology

This study employed a mixed-methods research design to examine the effectiveness of the Mindfulness, Wisdom, and Loving-Kindness model, combined with Dhamma music, in promoting children's emotional well-being at the Buddhamahametta Foundation. The study integrated qualitative and quantitative methods to obtain both descriptive insights and measurable evidence regarding the role of Dhamma music, the Buddhist peaceful means, and meditation practice in children's emotional development.

The research was conducted in three phases.

### Phase 1: Qualitative Study on Dhamma Music and Children's Meditation

The first phase examined the role of Dhamma music in supporting children's engagement in meditation. Data were collected through documentary analysis and focus group discussions with meditation instructors. The documentary analysis covered Buddhist teachings, previous studies on mindfulness and music, and relevant literature on children's meditation practices.

The focus group discussion explored how Dhamma music supports children's attention, emotional regulation, relaxation, and participation in meditation sessions. The data were analyzed using thematic content analysis to identify key themes related to children's engagement, emotional responses, and meditative learning.

**Phase 2: Quantitative Evaluation of the MWL Meditation Course**

The second phase evaluated the effects of the Mindfulness, Wisdom, and Loving-Kindness meditation course on children's emotional well-being. The participants were 19 children, consisting of 10 males and 9 females, aged between 6 and 12 years, who participated in the MWL meditation program at the Buddhamahametta Foundation. The WHO-5 Well-Being Index was used as a pre-test and post-test instrument to assess changes in children's well-being before and after participating in the program (World Health Organization, 1998). The WHO-5 indicators included positive mood, relaxation, vitality, sleep quality, and overall well-being. The pre-test and post-test scores were compared to evaluate changes in emotional well-being after the intervention.

**Phase 3: Qualitative Follow-up on Home-Based Practice**

The third phase explored the sustained effects of the MWL model with Dhamma music after a 14-day home-based continuation period. Children were encouraged to continue meditation practices at home, especially before bedtime, with parental support. Data were collected through structured interviews and reflective responses from child participants. The analysis focused on children's emotional balance, sleep quality, mindfulness engagement, motivation to continue practice, and preference for specific meditation techniques such as sitting meditation, walking meditation, loving-kindness meditation, and mindful prostration. The data were analyzed using thematic content analysis based on the MWL framework.

Ethical considerations were observed throughout the study. Participation was voluntary, informed consent was obtained from relevant guardians or participants, and data were used only for academic purposes. The mixed-methods design enabled the study to combine theoretical analysis, measurable well-being outcomes, and qualitative insights into children's lived experiences of meditation with Dhamma music.

## Research Results

**Objective 1:** The Role of Dhamma Music in Enhancing Children's Meditation Engagement

The findings show that Dhamma music plays an important role in making meditation more accessible, enjoyable, and developmentally appropriate for children. The focus group discussion and literature review indicate that rhythmic and melodic elements help children sustain attention, reduce restlessness, and enter a calmer emotional state during meditation. Dhamma music functions not merely as background sound but as a pedagogical and contemplative tool that supports concentration, relaxation, emotional regulation, and the internalization of Buddhist values such as patience, gratitude, and loving-kindness.

**Key findings include**:

From literature and theory:

- Dhamma music supports attentional focus and deep breathing, key elements in mindfulness training.
- It elicits positive emotional responses, aiding in relaxation and well-being.
- It reinforces Buddhist values in gratitude and loving-kindness meditation.

From empirical findings (Phase 1 Focus Group Discussion):

1. Enhanced engagement – Music creates a welcoming and enjoyable environment, improving focus and sustained participation.
2. Improved emotional regulation – Gentle melodies reduce restlessness and help children manage emotional challenges.
3. Support for cognitive and ethical development – Music reinforces the internalization of Buddhist virtues such as compassion and patience.

In conclusion, Dhamma music is more than an auditory aid; it is a core educational element that supports the holistic development of children in mindfulness-based Buddhist education. Its integration into meditation practices ensures that children's experiences are not only effective but also meaningful and developmentally enriching.

The insights drawn from both the comprehensive literature review and empirical data were systematically integrated into the development of the Mindfulness Wisdom and Loving-Kindness (MWL) program for children. This model was thoughtfully designed to ensure the effective incorporation of Dhamma music as

a core component, supporting and enhancing children's engagement with mindfulness and meditation. The MWL framework thus provides a structured, evidence-based approach that aligns with developmental needs and Buddhist principles, fostering emotional regulation, attentional focus, and inner peace in young practitioners.

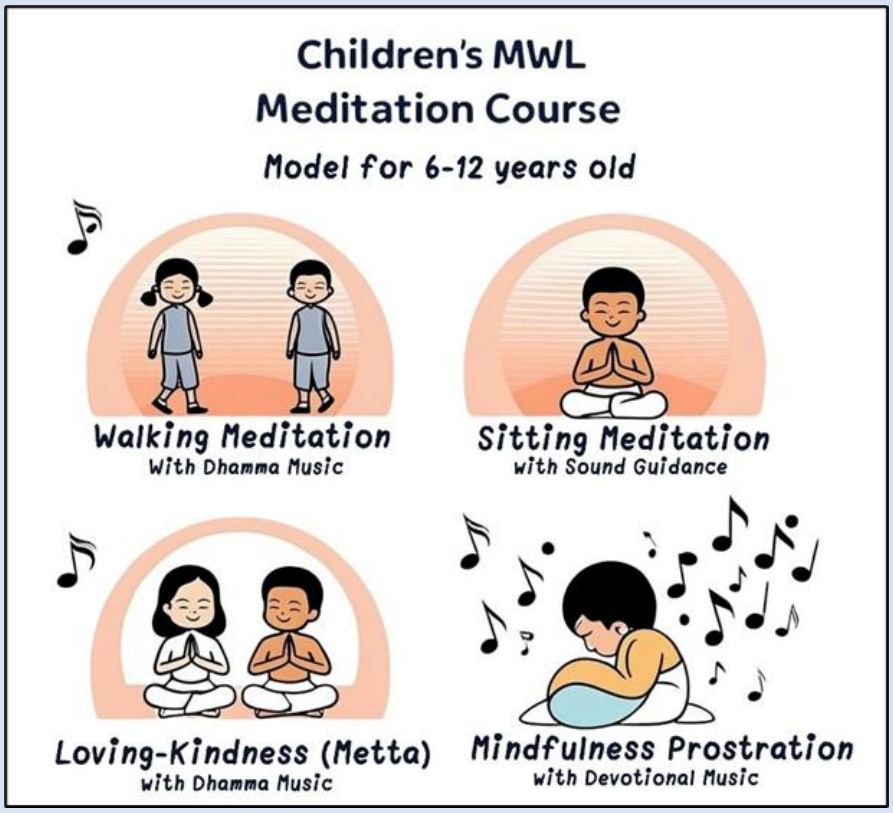



**Figure 2**: Model of the Children's Meditation Course with Dhamma Music

**Objective No. 2:** Buddhist Peaceful Means Integrated into the MWL Model

The findings indicate that Buddhist peaceful means, particularly mindfulness, wisdom, loving-kindness, gratitude, and ethical reflection, strengthen children's emotional and moral development. These principles help children cultivate calmness, kindness, empathy, self-awareness, and prosocial behavior. The integration of mindfulness and loving-kindness into the MWL model provides children with practical tools for managing emotions, developing positive relationships, and building inner resilience. Dhamma music further enhances these practices by creating a peaceful atmosphere and increasing children's motivation to participate.

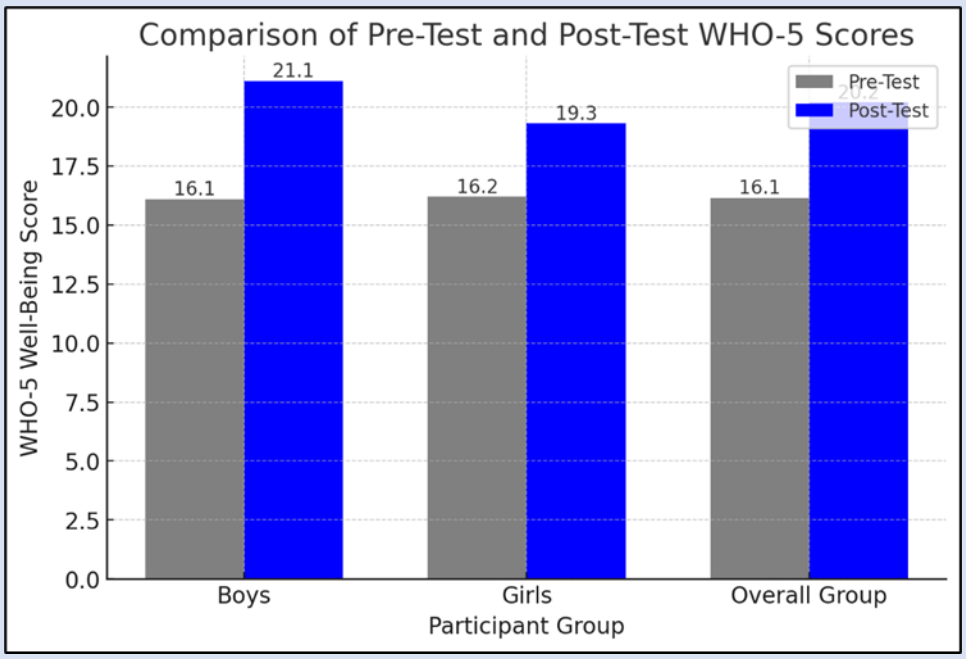



**Figure 3:** Pre-Test and Post-Test Comparison of WHO-5 scores by Participant Group

The bar graph clearly illustrates the substantial improvements in children's emotional well-being following participation in the MWL meditation curriculum. These findings confirm the effectiveness of integrating Buddhist peaceful methodologies and Dhamma music in enhancing mindfulness, emotional regulation, and overall psychological resilience among children. This evidence reinforces the value of the MWL program as a practical and impactful approach to supporting youth mental health and well-being.

The integration of findings from literature and experimental research affirms the effectiveness of the Mindfulness, Wisdom, and Loving-Kindness (MWL) program in enhancing children's well-being through structured meditation supported by Buddhist peaceful means and Dhamma music. This model successfully bridges theoretical foundations with practical outcomes, offering a culturally and developmentally appropriate approach to mindfulness education.

**Key Findings:**

1. Emotional Regulation and Inner Calmness:
   92% of participants experienced improved emotional balance and stress relief through music-enhanced meditation.
2. Improved Sleep Quality:
   85% of children reported better sleep, aided by soothing Dhamma music during bedtime mindfulness practice.
3. Increased Mindfulness and Focus:

Children demonstrated improved attentional control and sustained engagement in meditation, facilitated by rhythmic and melodic cues.

4. Ethical and Social Awareness:
   Gratitude meditations and musical reflections reinforced moral values, enhancing kindness and peer relationships.

**Development of Mettā and Compassion:**

Music-supported loving-kindness meditations deepened children's sense of empathy and emotional connection to others.

Integration into the MWL Model:

- Music-Guided Meditation: Structured soundscapes for enhancing attention and emotional stability.
- Metta Meditation with Music: Promotes unconditional goodwill and compassion.
- Mindful Breathing with Audio Cues: Encourages calm, especially at bedtime.
- Ethical Reflection with Dhamma Music: Reinforces Buddhist teachings through gratitude and mindfulness practices.

Overall, the MWL model presents a sustainable and evidence-based framework that supports children's cognitive, emotional, and ethical development. It demonstrates that combining Buddhist peaceful methodologies with Dhamma music is a powerful and holistic strategy for cultivating mindfulness, resilience, and well-being in young learners.

**Objective No. 3:** Effectiveness of the MWL Model with Dhamma Music

The quantitative and qualitative findings confirm that the MWL model with Dhamma music improved children's emotional well-being. The WHO-5 Well-Being Index pre-test and post-test results showed positive improvement after the meditation course. Children reported greater emotional balance, better sleep quality, increased mindfulness, and stronger motivation to continue practice at home. The 14-day home-based follow-up also showed that many children voluntarily continued listening to Dhamma music and practicing meditation before sleep. Among the meditation techniques, loving-kindness meditation appeared especially effective in promoting warmth, joy, emotional connection, and compassion.

**Table 1:** Results of Well-Being Indicators Based on the WHO-5 Scale

| Well-Being Indicator | Mean Score (Out of 5) |
|---|---|
| Feeling cheerful and in good spirits | **4.4** |
| Feeling calm and relaxed | **4.7** |
| Feeling energetic and active | **4.2** |
| Waking up refreshed | **4.6** |
| Daily life filled with interesting things | **4.5** |

The findings underscore the powerful role of Dhamma music in sustaining children's mindfulness engagement beyond formal meditation sessions. Many children independently continued to listen to Buddhist chants and calming music before sleep, reflecting a strong intrinsic motivation to maintain mindfulness practices. This self-driven continuity highlights the MWL model's success in fostering lasting emotional resilience and mental well-being.

To rigorously evaluate the impact of meditation practices supported by Dhamma music following a 14-day self-practice period, a content analysis methodology will be employed. This approach will identify key themes that reveal which meditation modalities most effectively promote sustained mindfulness, emotional balance, and overall well-being in children. The analysis will be systematically guided by the Mindfulness, Wisdom, and Loving-Kindness (MWL) framework, allowing for a structured examination of Dhamma music's influence across various practices—walking meditation, seated meditation, Metta meditation, and mindful prostration. This method ensures a comprehensive understanding of how each practice contributes to children's long-term emotional and psychological resilience.

**Table 2:** Evaluating Meditation Techniques with Dhamma Music

| Meditation Technique | Effectiveness Rating | Key Benefits | Potential Limitations |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Walking Meditation** | 3/5 | Engages movement, increases focus with rhythmic music | Less suitable for long sessions |
| **Sitting Meditation** | 4/5 | Deep relaxation, effective for emotional stability | Can induce drowsiness |
| **Metta (Loving-Kindness) Meditation** | 5/5 | Most effective for emotional warmth, gratitude, and connection | None |
| **Mindful Prostration (Bowing)** | 4/5 | Fosters gratitude, humility, and concentration | Less engaging for some children |

The content analysis reveals that Metta meditation was the most effective technique, with all participants reporting feelings of warmth, joy, and emotional connection. Sitting meditation and mindful prostration also demonstrated strong efficacy, particularly in promoting emotional regulation and cultivating gratitude. While walking meditation offered benefits, it had comparatively less universal appeal, as some children preferred stillness-based mindfulness practices. These findings affirm the central role of Metta meditation within the MWL model for fostering sustained emotional well-being and mindfulness in children.

The results from Phase 3 confirm that the MWL model, which integrates mindfulness practices with Dhamma music and Buddhist peaceful principles, has a sustained and transformative impact on children's emotional well-being. The home-based continuation of the practice over a 14-day period demonstrated lasting improvements in emotional regulation, sleep quality, and intrinsic motivation for mindfulness, underscoring the long-term effectiveness of this structured approach

Moreover, the study affirms that when mindfulness is introduced through engaging, structured formats, such as music-enhanced meditation, it becomes a sustainable, child-led habit. These results provide compelling evidence for the effectiveness of Buddhist peaceful methodologies, particularly the integration of Dhamma music, in cultivating long-term psychological stability and mindfulness in young learners.

**Key Takeaways:**

1. Sustained Emotional Regulation: Children maintained calmness and emotional balance beyond the classroom setting, particularly in stressful situations.
2. Improved Sleep and Anxiety Reduction: Listening to Dhamma music before bedtime supported deeper sleep and minimized anxiety-related disturbances.
3. Extended Mindfulness Engagement: Children applied mindfulness techniques, such as deep breathing, in their daily lives to manage stress and emotions.
4. Enduring Compassion and Mettā: Loving-kindness meditation continued to foster emotional warmth, empathy, and positive social behaviors.
5. Intrinsic Motivation: Many children voluntarily continued their mindfulness and music practice, showing a genuine and lasting interest.

The MWL framework proves effective in embedding mindfulness into children's routines, cultivating emotional resilience, ethical awareness, and spiritual development. Dhamma music serves not only as a meditative tool but also as a motivating and soothing influence, supporting long-term engagement and emotional growth. This study underscores the importance of integrating Buddhist tranquility practices in childhood mindfulness programs to promote holistic and sustainable well-being.

## Discussion

The findings of this study can be discussed according to the three research objectives. First, the study confirms that Dhamma music significantly enhances children's engagement in meditation at the Buddhamahametta Foundation. The findings show that children responded positively to rhythmic, melodic, and calming musical elements during meditation. Dhamma music helped create a peaceful atmosphere, reduce restlessness, sustain attention, and make meditation more enjoyable. This finding is consistent with Delport and Auerbach (2020), who argue that music activities can help develop mindfulness in children. It also supports Loo's (2018) finding that music and natural sounds can improve mindfulness, attention, well-being, and session attendance. In this sense, Dhamma music functions not merely as background sound but as a contemplative learning tool that helps children enter meditation more naturally.

Second, the study demonstrates that the integration of Buddhist peaceful means into the MWL model can support children's emotional and ethical development. Mindfulness helps children become aware of their thoughts, feelings, and bodily states. Loving-kindness promotes warmth, empathy, and positive relationships. Wisdom supports reflection and appropriate decision-making, while gratitude strengthens respect and appreciation. These findings align with Buddhist teachings on the Five Precepts, the Four Sublime States of Mind, and gratitude as foundations for ethical and peaceful living (AN 8.39; AN 10.208; Khp. 5). They also correspond with contemporary research showing that mindfulness-based interventions can improve children's emotional regulation, resilience, and social awareness (Dajon et al., 2023; Kander et al., 2024; Shah & Gupta, 2022).

Third, the study confirms the effectiveness of the MWL model, using Dhamma music, in improving children's emotional well-being. The WHO-5 Well-Being Index pre-test and post-test results showed improvement after

participation in the MWL meditation course. Qualitative follow-up also indicated better sleep quality, reduced anxiety, increased emotional balance, and stronger motivation to continue home-based practice. These findings show that music-supported meditation can become a sustainable and child-led practice when it is emotionally meaningful and culturally familiar. The results further support Jiwattanasuk et al. (2025), who found that the MWL program contributed to emotional warmth, joy, empathy, and psychological well-being.

Overall, the study contributes to Buddhist education and child mindfulness training by demonstrating that Dhamma music strengthens the practical application of the MWL model. It makes meditation more accessible to children, supports emotional regulation, reinforces Buddhist values, and encourages continuity of practice beyond formal sessions. The findings suggest that Dhamma music and the MWL model can serve as a holistic, Buddhist, and peaceful approach to cultivating emotional resilience, mindfulness, compassion, and ethical awareness among children.

## Knowledge from Research

This research offers substantial new insights into the fields of Buddhist peaceful methodologies, mindfulness cultivation, and the role of Dhamma music in enhancing children's meditative practices. The findings contribute important theoretical advancements, practical applications, and innovative strategies for integrating Buddhist principles into child-centered meditation programs.

Key areas of new knowledge include:

1. The validation of Dhamma music as an effective tool for sustaining children's attention, emotional regulation, and mindfulness engagement.
2. The demonstration of how Buddhist peaceful practices, particularly mindfulness, loving-kindness (Mettā), and gratitude (Kataññu), foster emotional resilience, compassion, and ethical development in children.
3. The establishment of the Mindfulness, Wisdom, and Loving-Kindness (MWL) model as a sustainable and culturally relevant framework for children's long-term emotional and cognitive well-being.
4. The evidence that structured, music-enhanced mindfulness programs can significantly improve not only emotional wellness but also executive functioning and decision-making skills in young learners.

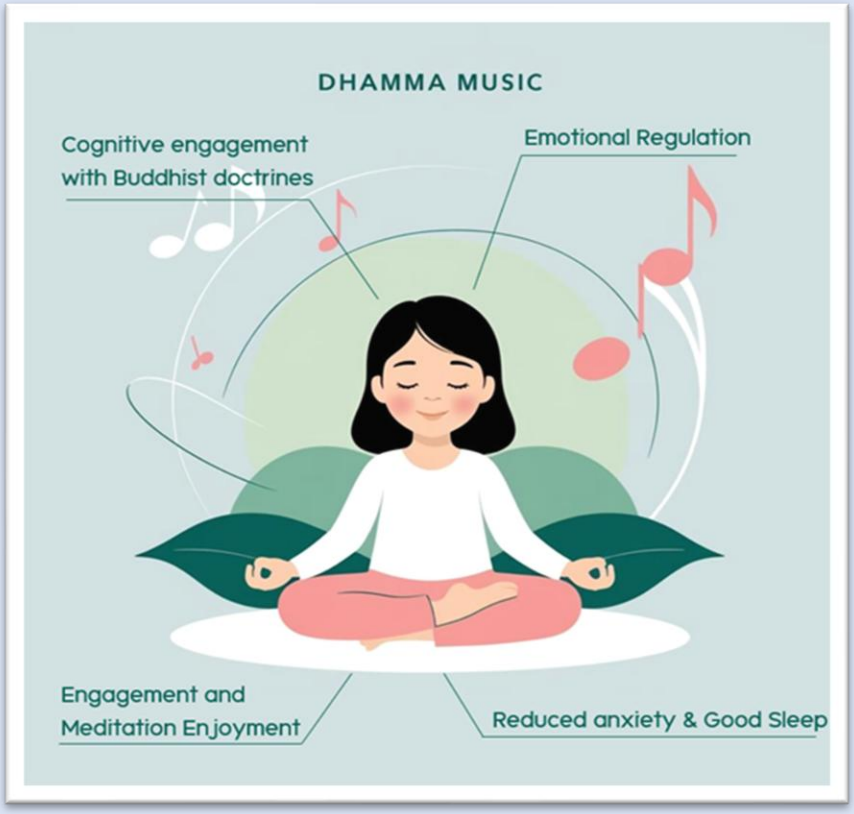



**Figure 4:** The advantages of Dhamma music for children.

Therefore, the new knowledge from this research may be summarized as the Dhamma Music–Integrated MWL Model, which consists of four interrelated dimensions:

| **Dimension** | **Core Practice** | **Function** | **Outcome** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Dhamma Music | Chanting, melody, calming sound | Sustains attention and emotional calm | Meditation engagement |
| Mindfulness | Breathing, body awareness, present-moment attention | Develops self-awareness and regulation | Emotional balance |
| Wisdom | Reflection and ethical understanding | Supports the right judgment and self-understanding | Responsible behavior |
| Loving-Kindness and Gratitude | Mettā meditation and gratitude reflection | Cultivates empathy, warmth, and respect | Prosocial behavior and well-being |

In conclusion, this research contributes to Buddhist education and child mindfulness training by demonstrating that Dhamma music can strengthen the practical application of the MWL model. It shows that Buddhist peaceful means

can be adapted into a structured, engaging, and sustainable framework for cultivating children's emotional resilience, mindfulness, compassion, ethical awareness, and holistic well-being.

## Conclusion

This study concludes that Dhamma music and the Mindfulness, Wisdom, and Loving-Kindness (MWL) model provide an effective Buddhist-based approach for promoting children's emotional well-being at the Buddhamahametta Foundation. The findings show that Dhamma music enhances children's engagement in meditation by creating a calm, enjoyable, and developmentally appropriate atmosphere. Through melody, rhythm, chanting, and gentle soundscapes, children can sustain attention, reduce restlessness, relax more easily, and participate more meaningfully in meditation practice.

The study also confirms that Buddhist peaceful means integrated into the MWL model contribute to children's emotional and ethical development. Mindfulness helps children become aware of their emotions and bodily states; wisdom encourages reflection and self-understanding; loving-kindness cultivates empathy, warmth, and compassion; and gratitude strengthens respect, appreciation, and prosocial behavior. These Buddhist principles work together to support emotional regulation, inner calm, ethical awareness, and positive relationships.

The evaluation of the MWL model with Dhamma music further demonstrates positive outcomes for children's well-being. The WHO-5 Well-Being Index indicated improvement after participation in the meditation course, while follow-up findings showed sustained emotional balance, better sleep quality, reduced anxiety, increased mindfulness, and voluntary continuation of practice at home. Loving-kindness meditation was especially effective in fostering warmth, joy, and emotional connection.

Therefore, the MWL model with Dhamma music can be regarded as a sustainable, culturally rooted, and developmentally appropriate framework for children's mindfulness training. It contributes to Buddhist education by showing how traditional Buddhist peaceful means can be adapted to modern child well-being programs. It also contributes to contemporary mindfulness practice by demonstrating that music-enhanced meditation can support emotional resilience, ethical awareness, and holistic development among young learners. Future

research should expand the participant group, conduct longitudinal evaluations, and compare different forms of Dhamma music and meditation techniques across diverse educational and spiritual settings.

## Suggestions

This study recommends the systematic integration of Dhamma music into mindfulness-based meditation programs for children to promote emotional regulation, cognitive resilience, and ethical development. Educational institutions and policymakers are encouraged to establish standardized guidelines for incorporating Buddhist peaceful methodologies into school curricula, emphasizing the importance of parental involvement and innovative, music-enhanced instructional practices. Future research should prioritize longitudinal investigations to assess the sustained impact of music-assisted mindfulness interventions on children's emotional and cognitive trajectories, alongside comparative analyses of different auditory guidance techniques. Furthermore, the integration of Mindfulness, Wisdom, and Loving-Kindness (MWL) practices within formal educational frameworks warrants scholarly attention to advance the development of holistic educational models that cultivate academic success, emotional well-being, and ethical consciousness among young learners.

## Abbreviation note

AN = Aṅguttara Nikāya
Khp = Khuddakapāṭha
Aṅguttara Nikāya. (1998). *Sikkha Sutta (Vol. 1).* Pali Text Society.
Aṅguttara Nikāya. (2002). *Kataññu Suttas (Vol. 1).* Pali Text Society.
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