**Methods section**

The research design for this study included the following categories: research purpose, the research question(s), setting, participants, method, data collection, data analysis.

**Research Purpose**

The purpose of this research study was to explore how teachers use mindfulness practices in their daily lives in order to reduce stress from the teaching profession. Research states that teaching is an arduous task, where teachers are physically and emotionally overworked (Eva & Thayer, 2017). Even though teaching can be a deeply fulfilling job, it is exhausting physically and emotionally, and teachers suffer many emotional pains and burdens in order to meet the needs of each student (Eva & Thayer, 2017). In order to help teachers, navigate the raging waters of teaching, teacher mindfulness practices enhance a teacher’s adaptability and resilience (Eva & Thayer, 2017). Eva and Thayer (2017) state teachers feel better in the profession and benefit their students more adequately using mindfulness practices. Parker Palmer (1998) states, “If we want to develop and deepen the capacity for connectedness at the heart of good teaching, we must understand-and resist- the perverse but powerful draw of the ‘disconnected life” (p.35). It is with the highest degree that this research aspires teachers to practice mindfulness in their own lives to reduce stress provoked from the teaching profession.

**Research Question:**

The study was driven by qualitative research questions which helped to create the interview questions: What mindfulness practices do teachers use to reduce stress in the teaching profession? This research question was accompanied by **sub-questions** to drive the data search which included: (a.) What knowledge and/or understanding do teachers have about mindfulness practices? and (b.) How do mindfulness practices help reduce stress for teachers?

**Setting:**

Somerdale Park Elementary School is a Pre-K-8 public school located in the Borough of Somerdale. Its current population is 499 students. The student to teacher ratio is 11:1. There are 47 teachers in the school. The racial make-up of the students includes: 26% Black or African American, 6% Asian or Pacific Islander, 17% Hispanic or Latino, and 48% White. The gender make-up is 51% male and 49% Female. 26% are eligible for free lunch. 5% are eligible for reduced lunch. Minority enrollment is 52% and the diversity score is 68%. Language arts proficiency is 41% school/53%state and math proficiency is 28% school/state 41%. Somerdale Park School is in the bottom 50% of school rankings.

**Participants**

In this study four teacher where interviewed. A music teacher, second grade teacher, kindergarten teacher, and gym teacher. All participants were female ranging between 28 and 55 years of age, with varying levels of teaching experience. The sample strategies used were purposeful sampling and snowball or chain sampling (Patton, 2002). Purposeful sampling allowed for information-rich cases allow the researcher to gain a deeper depth of participants who can share meaningful insight into the topic of the study in order to contribute to the central importance and purpose of the study (Patton, 2002). Snowball or chain sampling required the the location of information-rich cases in order to help answer the research question(s) (Patton, 2002). This type of sampling strategy starts with a simple inquiry asking people if they know, or if they know of others who know a lot about the topic of the research study (Patton, 2002). By seeking out people who know a lot about the topic of study, the snowball increases in size gradually, and in turn creates a group of participants with information-rich data (Patton, 2002). Artifacts were also collected from each teacher that helped developed the themes in this paper.

**Method:**

Qualitative research is grounded in research where a precise research purpose and research question is determined, but open to further inquiry and discoveries (Shagoury & Power, 2012). Qualitative research also requires data collection and data analysis set to a timeline. The research design is the backbone of the study and the research questions and data collection sustain the research study to lead the study to data analysis and indications for further research on the topic of study. Teacher researchers use the method of qualitative research for the purpose of conducting studies in their classrooms and/or schools. Teacher research is grounded in inquiries and is initiated and carried out by teachers (Shagoury & Power, 2012). Teacher researchers strive to discover essential questions and gather data for analyzing in order to answer those essential questions. Teacher researchers can be the key to educational change in order to transform teaching, learning, leadership, and schooling for all learners and teachers. Not all teacher researchers need to become social activists to take their research beyond their schools, but they can help add to a particular issue that calls for change for more effective educational practices. Teacher researchers’ local work could reach out to the wider educational community which could help lead to furthering educational transformation.

Qualitative research is highly appropriate for this study because it using the technique of interviewing to understand why people think, feel, react and behave in the way that they do. The approach is very opened-ended and can be adapted ad changed during the research process to enhance the quality of the data and insights generated. The data generated provided in depth insight into the question or topic. The scope of this research aims to explore what mindfulness practices teachers use in order to cope with the stressors that teaching profession brings into a teacher’s social and emotional life. In order to gain a deep understanding of the stress teachers endure and how they cope, personal interviews provided the most intimate data, because teachers shared their inner most stressors they endure as teachers, and the various mindfulness practices that help them teach amid a profession that produces physical, mental, and emotional strain. This study intended to dig deep into the lives of every teacher interviewed and intimate personal conversations were the best method. Interviewing provided many emotional moments, sensitive topcis, difficult experiences that related to personal and work life confronting each teacher’s mental and emotional health, with reflections from the past, present, and future (Mitchell & Irvine, 2008). The qualitative nature of interviewing helped reach the goals of the research study in order to draw conclusions from the stressors that teachers endure daily, and the mindfulness practices these teachers used to create inner peace in their lives.

**Data Collection**

The data collection consisted of interviews, artifacts, and a researcher journal to record observations. Four teachers were interviewed individually and asked questions related directly to teacher stress caused from the profession, and mindfulness practices the teacher used to reduce stress in their lives. Interviewing was quintessential because the research wanted to know personally what teachers are doing in their lives to reduce stress from the profession, in terms of mindfulness practices. According to Rubin and Rubin (2012) interviewing allows for rich, detailed information that is open-ended, where the participant(s) share real-life examples of experiences, narratives, and stories. This technique allows for questions to freely flow, where the participants responses lead the interviewing process (Rubin and Rubin (2012), so that responses are organic, raw, insightful, and meaningful. The transcripts are included in this final report. The teacher research journal served as a place to record observations of teacher preparation periods and classroom teaching, According to Janesick (1999) research journals adds to the triangulation of data in a study, helps the researcher reflect further, and lets the researcher fine tune the ideas and beliefs during the process of the study. The researcher journal allowed for deeper reflection and the development of essential questions that helped emerged during the study in order to gain deeper meaning into how mindfulness practices help teachers deal with the stressors of teaching. Each teacher was asked to share artifacts from their own personal lives that showed how they utilize mindfulness practices to reduce teacher stress. The artifacts were collected and categorized, and sifted in order to choose artifacts that served the research’s purpose in a powerful way. Rossman and Rallis (2017) explain that the three essential techniques in qualitative data collection are observation, interviewing, and the study of “material culture” (pg.173) which helps to supplements and clarify the data collected in observations and interviews. Interviewing, observing, and the collection of artifacts created a strong triangulation of data in order to prove that teacher mindfulness practices due help to reduce teacher stress from the profession.

**Data Analysis**

Process coding is the practice of assigning a label to a section of data, such as an interview transcript, using a word or short phrase taken from that section of the data (Saldana, 2016). Process coding allows the researcher to take an interview transcript and dissect every response (sentence by sentence) for meaning. Every sentence has meaning from the interviewee, and process coding helps generate multiple phrases from every response that will eventually help create multiple solid findings in summaries. These summaries will birth similar themes and concepts across participant responses.

Pattern coding is a way of grouping summaries into a smaller number of sets, themes, or constructs (Saldana, 2016). Interview transcripts contain a varied amount of perceptions, ideologies, and experiences. The researcher has to dig deep to find meaning by understanding the material literally or by drawing conclusions. Pattern coding allows frequent or significant codes to be grouped together into coded categories. This allows the researcher to create data discoveries based on the poignant thematic or conceptual similarities that arise from the qualitative data.