

Withholding the Wandering Mind: Examining the Influence of Mindfulness on Employees' Life Satisfaction and Job Involvement

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ABSTRACT

Workplace mindfulness and its impact have been inadequately understood so far within the managerial literature in Indian context. This paper examines the effects of workplace mindfulness on employees working in private sectors. The present study aimed to see the influence of mindfulness on employees' life satisfaction and job involvement. The study examined professionals, identified through purposive sampling of (N = 150, 86 males and 64 females). The tools used were—namely, Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS), Job Involvement Scale and Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS). To determine individual's degree of conscious awareness about things in work settings was assessed by using trait mindfulness construct (MAAS). The present study aimed to see the influence of mindfulness on employees' life satisfaction and job involvement. Mindfulness was found to be significantly mediating the relationship between life satisfaction and job involvement. Study also investigated the predictive power of mindfulness with respect to employees' life satisfaction. Findings support the hypotheses and claim for the positive correlation between the two constructs. We acknowledge the theoretical and factual implication of this research features provide broad pathways for more future researches on mindfulness in workplace settings.

Keywords: *Mindfulness, Life Satisfaction and Job Involvement*

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INTRODUCTION

Currently, mindfulness has witnessed a remarkable growth in clinical and counselling setups. Past few years have depicted some phenomenal researches on mindfulness in different fields such as personality, social, clinical and counselling psychology. Few researches done in the past, state that mindfulness is positively correlated with life satisfaction and personal relationships and negatively correlated with stress, anxiety and depression. The importance of mindfulness for the well-being and life satisfaction of employees has also been studied. (Brown et al., 2007, Glomb et al., 2011). In addition, self-report research showed that mindfulness differs from individual to individual and also impact traits and skills (Hafenbrack, et al., 2014).

Since very limited empirical evidences have been collected from organisational sector in the area of mindfulness, as a result of it, some important key factors remain unanswered. Firstly, does mindfulness positively affect life satisfaction? If yes, then to what extent and degree, is yet to be answered. Secondly, how mindfulness is related to employee's psychological mental health, well-being, life satisfaction, and job involvement behavior? Thirdly, is there any significant contribution of mindfulness in employees' lifestyle and life satisfaction? A small amount of work done in this area states that mindfulness is favourable in relation to behaviours, particularly well being and life satisfaction (Allen and Kiburz, 2012; Hülshager et al., 2013; Leroy et al., 2013). Nonetheless, very finite work has been presented on mindfulness in Indian corporate sectors. In today's world employees are experiencing an overload of work and pressure in maintaining their work-life balance. Kumari, Joshi and Pandey (2014) presented a paper which states that over the time private companies face stress and pressure during working hours. They mentioned that 98 out of 100 people feel stressed physically, mentally and emotionally in their daily life.

There is enough literature to suggest that there exists a strong connection between workplace mindfulness, life satisfaction and individual performance. As a matter of fact, very limited work in this context has been portrayed by research scholars in Indian work settings. Based on little empirical evidences, we are predicting that workplace mindfulness increases life satisfaction in employees. As the title suggests, wandering mind leads to thoughts which are not task oriented and the person is therefore not able to engage in an attention-demanding task. Researchers

mentioned that mind wandering appears to be a stable trait of people and a state of transient. The present study also focuses on trait mindfulness of employees which will help in understanding the involvement of their trait mindfulness at workplace.

WORKPLACE MINDFULNESS

Mindfulness is an active state where one focuses on the present moment. Marlatt and Kristeller (1999) proposed that mindfulness is “bringing one’s complete attention to the present experience on a moment-to-moment basis”. A theory based research has been proposed which talks about the importance of mindfulness in occupational setups. Likewise, Brown and Ryan (2003) explained mindfulness as “an open, undivided observation of what is occurring both internally and externally”. Wheeler, Arnkoff and Glass (2016) provide the importance of mindfulness classifying it into two different parts. One is dispositional mindfulness also known as trait mindfulness and another one is deliberate mindfulness known as intentional mindfulness. In the present study, we intend to find out trait mindfulness and its correlation with life satisfaction and job involvement among employees.

Trait and State Mindfulness. Black (2011) studied mindfulness by dividing it into three major domains such as trait or dispositional mindfulness, state mindfulness and practice mindfulness. Trait mindfulness, also known as dispositional attribute has long lasting trait which exists in individual’s personality. Whereas, state mindfulness is known as an immediate conscious awareness and being present in the moment. Researchers have developed constructs based on self-reporting to measure trait and state mindfulness in an individual. For example, Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS) measures trait mindfulness of an individual and the State Mindfulness Scale (SMS) measures state of the mind and body.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT ON MINDFULNESS

Mindfulness as a concept came from Eastern traditions, in particular Buddhism, they recognized mindfulness as a path towards liberation and removal of personal sufferings (Thera, 1962). The concept is recently embrace by the western culture, to explore the conscious awareness and

paying attention to present moments. Researchers targeted mindfulness on two core perspectives, one is Traditional conceptualization and another is western conceptualization. Traditional conceptualization drives from Eastern philosophy given by Buddhism and theory advanced by Kabat-Zinn (2006). Whereas, Western conceptualization was developed by Langer (1989). Description and comparison of these two school of thought was reviewed by Hart et al., (2013).

Over the years mindfulness has shown huge growth in the clinical and academics. Mindfulness differentiated in many ways as self-awareness and related theories by different authors and researchers such as Duval & Wicklund (1972) describe about theory of objective self-awareness. Another researcher Buss (1980) mentioned self-consciousness theory, which talks about awareness of internal self. Similarly, Carver and Scheier (1981) presented control theory which helps in understanding the internal locus of control. Earlier, Langer, et., al. (1989) to observe the effect of mindfulness among elders. Results show that there were significant stress reduction and increase in positive behaviour by just changing their daily routine and chores. There is a developing interest regarding mindfulness in workplace area and human well-being. (Linehan 1993) suggested intervention based therapy named as acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT) which is helpful for one to incorporate mindfulness in their lives. Hodgins & Knee (2002) proposed that mindfulness can ease the process of reaching individual's well-being through fulfilment of primary psychological needs and drives for competences and interpersonal relations. Brown and Ryan (2003) simplify the theoretical and empirical evidences which includes cross-sectional and laboratory researches that predict mindfulness promotes human well-being. Shapiro, et. al., (2006) provided a theoretical research support with IAA model: intention, attention and attitude. A mindfulness model which look into structure and important components. In (Shapiro et al., 2008) research has been conducted in clinical settings which show that there is a significant correlation between mindfulness and anxiety reduction. Research provides prominent stress reduction in the individuals. Another research supports that mindfulness enhances human ability to perform better and reduce stress (Whetten & Cameron, 2007).

Studies have shown that the understanding and intensity of mindfulness differs between individuals, and some people are more mindful than others (Baer et al., 2006). This idea was supported by Lau et al., (2006) in their study as well. Through all these studies, the concept of workplace

mindfulness has evolved and it manifests individual's aspects in workplace settings. Ocasio (2011) mentioned the performance engaged benefits of mindfulness in an organisation or workplace. He majorly reflected upon the positive effects of mindfulness on attention. In their research work, Fehr and Gelfand (2012) have suggested that practicing mindfulness training on individuals helps in performance improvement and cognitive attention. Identically, Lee (2012) proposed that providing mindfulness training to employees can increase work effectiveness and potential of an individual.

JOB INVOLVEMENT

Initially job involvement was considered as an explanation of employees' determination towards work (Lawler, 1986). The term also justifies the foundation of cutthroat competition in business and possible benefits in market (Lawler, 1992; Pfeffer, 1994). The first construct was developed by Lodahl and Kejner (1965) to study job involvement in diverse work settings. Most of our life revolves around work and huge portion of our time is dedicated towards work. Therefore, job involvement is an important factor which may help us understand the affecting mechanism in one's life. The condition of an individual's life depends upon their life experiences, where the quality of that experience includes the degree of involvement and engagement of self in work. On the other hand, detachment leads to distancing from oneself and work environment (Kanungo, 1982b; Marx, 1932; McGregor, 1960). Kanungo (1979) describes two states that are state of involvement and state of alienation, which are considered to be polar in nature. The concept majorly focuses on the core characteristics of life such as parenthood, religion, marriage, family, and recreational activities. The characteristic also focus on individual's psychological demands and needs. Psychological needs include basic understanding of work relationship and its relation with daily work experiences. Kanungo (1979) described job involvement as "a generalized cognitive state of psychological identification with work, in so far as work is perceived to be instrumental in satisfying one's salient needs and expectations".

LIFE SATISFACTION

The term 'life satisfaction' is well known as a cognitive judgmental process. Shin and Johnson (1978) described life satisfaction as "a global assessment

of a person's quality of life according to his chosen criteria". Judgement of satisfaction highly depends on how one's life events occurred and interpreted over the time period. It also depends upon how an individual compares circumstances with what is meant to be an appropriate standard. Subjective well-being works as a hallmark surrounded by person's own judgement rather than focusing on some criterion provided by researchers. To measure life satisfaction one needs to be evaluated on their overall life experience, rather than focusing on some particular events or domains of life. Tatarkiewicz (1976) state "happiness requires total satisfaction, that is satisfaction with life as a whole". Diener (1984) presented a construct called the Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS) based on cognitive judgmental process.

MINDFULNESS AND JOB INVOLVEMENT

There is dearth in literature regarding research concerning whether mindfulness and job involvement have some relationship with each other. Lodhal & Kejnar (1965) introduced the concept of job involvement and developed a scale which measures the aspects of job involvement and its relations with job attributes. Another scale on job involvement was developed by Kanungo (1982) and the construct was based on psychological mechanisms enriched by a cognitive state. Similarly, Walton (1972) research shows a positive impact of job involvement and productivity in the individuals. Nugent (2013) "Job Involvement is the degree to which a person psychologically identifies with his or her job." Paullay et. al., (1994) job involvement can be viewed as a psychological condition wherein an employee "is cognitively preoccupied with, engaged in, and concerned with one's present job". Chen and Chiu (2009) mentioned in his research paper that "high job involvement are more independent and self-confident—they not only conduct their work in accordance with the job duties required by the company but are also more likely to do their work in accordance with the employees' perception of their own performance". Whereas, Dane (2011) defined mindfulness as "a state of consciousness in which attention is focused on present-moment phenomena occurring both externally and internally." Despite knowing mindfulness and job involvement as a term so well, there are still some unanswered questions and confusion related what mindfulness is and what it is not. There are research papers which thoroughly talks about the nature of mindfulness

but somehow overlapping from other attention related constructs. This research is seeking to reduce a theoretical blind spot and concerning a contribution towards literature. Structurally, it begins by providing the theory behind two constructs and looking whether they have some association between two of them.

MINDFULNESS AND LIFE SATISFACTION

The association between mindfulness and life satisfaction has been well existed in past, but the prospective future is still unclear, which might explain some future oriented mechanisms to understand the relationship more in depth. However, few ideas provide the liability of mindfulness act as agent which provides beneficial effects for life satisfaction. Many researches quoted that mindfulness may facilitate emotional intelligence and as a key contributor to the development of individual's perceived emotions and feelings, which may contribute to their life satisfaction. (Coffey & Hartman, 2008; Coffey, Hartman & Fredrickson, 2010). Similarly, Wang & Kong (2013) research work state that mindfulness may promote life satisfaction and emotional intelligence among young people.

JOB INVOLVEMENT AND LIFE SATISFACTION

In past, job involvement is majorly studied with job satisfaction and work performance. There were very few researches which mention a correlation or association with the two terms. However, Judge, Watanabe and Shinichiro (1993) studied the relationship between job satisfaction and life satisfaction. Cross sectional research showed a significant correlation between the two variables. They were reciprocally related to each other and showed positive association. Similarly, Hall & Lawler (1970) provides a study which mentions that job involvement shows a significant individual satisfaction and increase in performance. Whereas, Knoop (2010) mentioned that job involvement is not related to overall life satisfaction. In spite of all these researches, there are still some unproved conclusive results regarding the nature of relationship between job involvement and life satisfaction as constructs. One of the major purpose of this study was to find out the nature of relationship between the two constructs.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To understand the relationship between mindfulness and life satisfaction among employees.
- To understand the relationship between mindfulness and job involvement among employees.
- To understand the relationship between life satisfaction and job involvement among employees.
- Understanding the mediating role of mindfulness in the relationship between life satisfaction and job involvement.

HYPOTHESES

H1 There will be significant relationship between mindfulness and employees' life satisfaction.

H2 There will be significant relationship between employees' mindfulness and job involvement.

H3 There will be significant relationship between employees' life satisfaction and job involvement.

H4 Mindfulness will significantly mediate the effect of life satisfaction on job involvement.

METHOD

Sample: The sample consisted of 150 employees which included 86 males and 64 females. Samples were selected using purposive sampling method, as per the requirement of the research. The selected employees had minimum 2 to 8 years of work experience in a private organization. Participants were those working in the private sector organization and residing in Delhi NCR.

TOOLS

Job Involvement Scale: Job involvement was assessed with a 10-item job involvement questionnaire developed by Kanungo in (1982). Statements were measured on 5-point Likert rating scale ranging from (1) disagree to (5) agree. The Cronbach's alpha value is 0.89, revealing reliability of the test.

Mindfulness: The core characteristic of mindfulness was assessed with a 15-item scale named as Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale

(MAAS), trait version developed by Brown & Ryan (2003). Scale measures trait mindfulness of an individual which is based on core characteristics of mindfulness such as attention and being aware about the present. Statements were measured on 6-point scale ranging from (1) Almost Always to (6) Almost Never. The Cronbach's alpha value is varying from .80 to .90. MAAS signifies high test- rest reliability and criterion validity.

Life Satisfaction: Life satisfaction was assessed with a 5-item scale named as Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS) developed by Diener (1985). The construct is solely based on subjective well-being. The construct is based on two core components such as emotional component and cognitive component. The Cronbach's alpha value is 0.87 and test-retest reliability is 0.54. Scale shows good convergent validity with other types of assessments related to subjective well-being.

Procedure: A brief introduction was given about the study to the participants and their volunteer agreement was ensured. Participants were also assured about the confidentiality of the test results. Each participant was contacted personally. There was no time limit for the completion of tool.

RESULTS

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of the Sample on Mindfulness, Mindfulness Organizational and Life Satisfaction

	Mindfulness	Job Involvement	Life Satisfaction
M	61.89	30.51	20.88
SD	13.44	7.50	5.97

The descriptive statistics of all the three variables presented in this study are displayed in (table 1).

Table 2: Correlation Analysis Between Variables Mindfulness, Job Involvement and Life Satisfaction

Variables	Mindfulness	Job Involvement	Life Satisfaction
Mindfulness	-		
Job Involvement	.09	-	
Life Satisfaction	.34**	.22**	-

Note. N=150. **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Pearson's correlation coefficient was calculated in order to examine the correlation between the employees' level of mindfulness and life satisfaction. Results show that there is a significant correlation between two of them (see Table 2). Findings depicts that the level of mindfulness shows a significant influence on employees' life satisfaction. The result is significant at 0.01 level and shows moderate correlation between two variables.

Table 3: Mediation analyses for Mindfulness: Predicting Job Involvement with Life Satisfaction

Predictors	F	beta	t
Life Satisfaction	Dependent Variable: Mindfulness		
	19.23***	.76	4.39***
Life Satisfaction	Dependent Variable: Job Involvement		
	7.82**	.28	2.79**
Life Satisfaction & Mindfulness	Dependent Variable: Job Involvement		
	3.91*	Life Satisfaction 0.25 Mindfulness 0.01	2.55** 0.22

Note: * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$

Mediation analyses were done in order to assess the mediating role of mindfulness in the relationship between life satisfaction and job involvement. All the three preconditions identified by Baron and Kenny (1986) were met. First, life satisfaction (predictor variable) significantly predicted mindfulness (i.e. the mediator variable). Second, life satisfaction (predictor variable) significantly predicted job involvement (criterion variable). Finally, mindfulness (mediator variable) significantly predicted job involvement (criterion variable); and the effect of life satisfaction (predictor variable) on job involvement (criterion variable) was less, i.e. $\beta = .25$ as compared to the earlier $\beta = .28$, when both life satisfaction (predictor variable) and mindfulness (mediator variable) are put in the regression equation. This indicated that mindfulness significantly mediated the relationship between life satisfaction and job involvement as the prediction power of life satisfaction for job involvement was reduced when both mindfulness and life satisfaction were together considered as predictors of job involvement.

DISCUSSION

The present study examined the influence of mindfulness on employees' job involvement and their life satisfaction. The objective of this study focuses on understanding the relationship between mindfulness, life satisfaction and job involvement among employees. Another objective was to understand the mediating role of mindfulness in the relationship between life satisfaction and job involvement. Hypothesis 1 is accepted where it can be elucidated that mindfulness and life satisfaction among employees are significantly and positively correlated. The results also suggest that there is a significant positive correlation between the mindfulness and job satisfaction (see Table 2). It determines that employees responding with high level of mindfulness experience high level of life satisfaction in their lives. Kong et al., (2014) states that there is a positive association between mindfulness and life satisfaction which also mediate the core self-evaluations. Since life satisfaction is strongly based on subjective well-being theory thus such findings predict that mindfulness plays an important role in individual's life which helps one in building life satisfaction at higher levels. However hypothesis 2 is rejected, as no significant correlation was found between employees' mindfulness and job involvement in the results (see Table 2) which depicts that there is no significant relationship between the two constructs. Present research also studies if there is any correlation between employees' life satisfaction and job involvement. So, hypothesis 3 is accepted where findings from the analysis suggest that the construct of job involvement and life satisfaction shows a significant positive correlation.

Lawler (1986) mentioned that job involvement affects individual's life satisfaction in order to gain higher goals and achievement. He mentioned that there are distinct kinds of attitudes one has towards his/her job. Such attitudes reflect on performance thus achieving higher satisfaction from life. As life satisfaction and job involvement have been found to be correlated in previous researches, and mindfulness is correlated with life satisfaction, it was hypothesized whether mindfulness mediates the influence of life satisfaction on job involvement and hypothesis 4 is accepted (see Table 3). The results show a significant mediating role of mindfulness on the influence of life satisfaction on job involvement. Researches have reported that trait mindfulness which is well known as individual's mindful tendency to reflect in daily life has been seen

as promoting psychological well-being and life satisfaction (Brown and Ryan 2003; Cash and Whittingham 2010; Keng et al., 2011; Rasmussen and Pidgeon 2011).

The advantage of present investigation is that it examined the dispositional mindfulness and provided insight within its influence on life satisfaction among employees and job involvement. The centrality of job atmosphere and job condition among people's lives has been re-examined where in mindfulness has had a mediating effect with respect to life satisfaction of men and women employed in private multinational organizations. Workplace has become a part of personal space for many as they spend most of their time besides family at their respective workplaces. Practicing mindfulness in employees' daily life helps them to improve their decision making and psychological well-being. Researchers have mentioned that many corporations incorporate mindfulness practice in their organizations-namely-Apple, Mayo Clinic, General Mills, and U.S. Army practice mediation and mindfulness coaching to enhance workplace functioning (Good et.al., 2015; Schultz et al., 2014). Employee centric approaches have been taken up by many organizations in the recent past which are in alignment with the results of this study. Mindfulness is also being integrated into many workplaces as it helps in enhancing workplace relationships, job engagement and in general life satisfaction. Thus mindfulness enables employees to consciously and more skillfully navigate life both at workplace and home in turn fostering awareness and creativity across the diverse age groups and ethnicities.

In today's world, employees are suffering with overloaded work and pressure of maintaining work life balance. From past few years, the concept of workplace mindfulness has evolved and it manifests individual's aspects in workplace settings.

CONCLUSION

The present study substantially provides insights on mindfulness, job involvement and life satisfaction in employees. Findings highlight the relation between mindfulness and life satisfaction. With the rising interest in mindfulness, to this date insufficient number of researches has determined the role of mindfulness at workplace in Indian context. The present research addresses these gaps by examining the influence of mindfulness on employees' life satisfaction and its relation with job involvement. This research hypothesized that mindfulness is positively associated with life

satisfaction and investigate if there is some contribution of mindfulness in employees' life satisfaction. Results provide consistent support for our hypothesis. Another hypothesis tested if there is any relationship between mindfulness and job involvement. Analysis represents that there was no significant relationship between the two constructs. The study also investigates the mediating role of mindfulness on the effect of life satisfaction on job involvement. Results interpreted as the effect of life satisfaction on job involvement is significantly mediated through mindfulness. Over the year, researches based on mindfulness have shown a positive impact on individual's well-being and cognitive abilities. In today's world, employees are suffering with overloaded work and pressure of maintaining work life balance. From past few years, the concept of workplace mindfulness has evolved and it manifests individual's aspects in workplace settings. Researchers have mentioned that mindfulness differs on individual's level and showed immense interest in enhancing wellbeing of individuals (e.g., Ryan & Deci, 2001). This research nourishes the inclination and hope plays a significant role in providing new prospective ways in the field of mindfulness. Our exploratory research can help scholars to look into theoretical importance and significance of practicing workplace mindfulness in Indian private sector. This might assist the future endeavour for further researches in this region.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATION

The literature on mindfulness in workplace context is very limited. This research might help by giving little contribution to the literature. In consideration to the findings, it provides guidance to cultivate mindfulness in employees life to enhance their subjective well-being, which help in improving the rates of life satisfaction. Workplace mindfulness is at infancy stage, this research helps in aiding literature review and provides a tentative direction to work in the field of mindfulness at workplace. The present research found reliable individual difference in level of mindfulness and employees' satisfaction with life. This study also presents the association of two constructs, namely- mindfulness and job involvement. Organization may plan for intervention to enhance mindfulness in the employees. This in turn may positively influence life satisfaction and thereby the job involvement, as mindfulness was found to be a significant mediator. This result might handout a small amount of significant addition to the literature.

LIMITATIONS/ FUTURE RESEARCH

This research contributes to our understanding of mindfulness and their influence on job involvement and life satisfaction. But, there were several limitations. First, the sample was collected from private sector which reduces our ability to generalize it on other sectors or population. Researches on mindfulness at workplace is in its early stages of development, adding more researches to the literature which help in understanding the nature of mindfulness and how mindfulness can be examined and cultivated. Through future research, scholars can examine the mindfulness training and its effects on workplace mindfulness.

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