

## Effectiveness of Mindfulness based Interventions at Workplace- A Review

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**Abstract:** Having happy state of mind is an important indicator of employee's well-being. The hypothesis happy worker-productive worker states that "employees high in well-being also perform well and vice versa" (Wright & Cropanzano, 2000). Organisations have to make sure such "happy and productive worker". To ensure wellbeing of employee number of organizations are accepting different methodologies like as mindfulness training to improve workplace functioning, relationships, optimal performance of employees (Good et al., 2016). Mindfulness is stated that "state of paying attention in the present moment in an accepting and kind way" (Kabat-Zinn, 2003). There are number of evidences showed that mindfulness in the workplace has positive effects that include reduction in stress levels, improved sleep quality (RQ Wolever et al., 2012). By becoming more conscious for the present moment person can enjoy and understand the world more effectively. Team leader can decrease stress and increase efficiency among team members by encourages them to practice mindfulness (Forbes Coaches Council 2017). Mindfulness-based interventions may have always provided certain benefits relevant at workplace. The present review paper highlights the studies on mindfulness based intervention at workplace related to "employee's over well-being and performance". From the review it can be concluded that mindfulness based intervention promotes wellbeing at workplace.

**Keywords:** Wellbeing, Mindfulness, Workplace

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### I. Introduction

There are number of researches conveying the positive result of "mindfulness meditation" on psychological well-being of the individuals. Founded in ancient Eastern meditation practices, mindfulness is a non-religious exercise of detached observation. The most widely known definition of mindfulness is "paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally" (Kabat-Zinn, 1994). Number of research finding supports the positive effects of mindfulness training for various populations (Fjorback, Arendt, Ørnbøl, Fink, & Walach, 2011). Different companies like Aetna, General Mills and Google are offering different mindfulness training to improve effectiveness of the employees (Liou, Daly, Canrinus, Forbes, Moolenaar, Cornelissen, & Hsiao, 2017). Now a days there is increased uses of mindfulness meditation to enable employees more productive, happier and stress free, like trait mindfulness helps in reduction of psychological distress (Walach, Buchheld, Buttenmüller, Kleinknecht, and Schmidt, 2006) and related to decreased level of anxiety, depression and more positive emotions and happiness (Brown and Ryan, 2003). Mindfulness training at the place of work linked with lower emotional collapse which is symbolic to burnout in the workplace environment (Hülshager, Alberts, Feinholdt & Lang, 2013) and significant improvement in "psychological well-being" and decrease stress level after mindfulness training (Gu, Strauss, Bond, & Cavanagh, 2015). Different interventions like "mindfulness-based stress reduction" (Kabat-Zinn, 1991), "mindfulness-based cognitive therapy" (Segal, Williams, and Teasdale, 2002, 2013) are offered both in clinical and non-clinical settings to reduce the symptom of stress and depression. Finding of the research reveals the positive effect of "mindfulness trainings" on reducing stress (Khoury et al., 2013). Kivimäki et al. (2015) in their study said that working for long hours increases the threat for stroke. Mental health issues have been increased in organisation which is now the prominent source of illness, absenteeism in the UK (Davies, 2014). In UK the "Health and Safety Executive [HSE] (2016)" expected that overall ten "million working days" are wasted due to anxiety, depression and stress among employees. In that case mindfulness helps in managing wellbeing and mental health of the employees. "Workplace mindfulness interventions" helps in reduction of stress level, burnout and improving employee wellness (Good et al., 2016; Lomas et al., 2017). It can enable us to feel less stunned, improve sleep quality, positively change the way a person think and feel in stressful experiences, improves the ability to manage difficult situations and reduce the levels of anxiety, depression.

## II. Mindfulness and Employee's Wellbeing

A study was done by Manocha, Black, Sarris & Stough (2011) in Australia to discover how meditation plays role on work stress and anxiety, eight weeks training given to the participants. Outcome showed that there is significant decrease in sadness, psychological tension and depression. "Manocha, Gordon, Black, Malhi, and Seidler" (2009) trained the 293 medical practitioners in meditation skills which are proposed to quiet the mind's thought streams for increasing psychological well-being and participants were trained in After training greater mental silence as well as lesser mental suffering was reported by participants. Another study by Shapiro and colleagues (2004) showed that MBSR "decrease burnout, psychological distress, and increase in mindful awareness and attention" using among nurses. There were significant reduction in burnout, management of stress, effect on self-care and compassion and also reported greater relaxation and enhancement in work-family relations. The U.S. Military in marine training implement "Mindfulness-based Mind Fitness Training (MMFT)" to strengthen mental wellbeing. Stanley and colleagues (2011) conducted a study whose aim is to determine the effect "Mindfulness-based Mind Fitness Training (MMFT)" for strengthen psychological resilience and decreasing the effects of stressors. Results of the study specify that rises in mindfulness level result in decrease in perceived stress and vice versa and individually participants showed improved abilities of attention and focus on assignment, better self-awareness and emotional control, and enhanced interpersonal relations. Leroy and colleagues (2013) investigated significant effect of mindfulness on work commitment through realistic functioning and showing self-awareness and self-regulation among six different organizations. The study brings outcome that "mindfulness" was clearly associated to "work engagement". Now researchers are showing interest in practical use of mindfulness in organisational settings (Glomb, Duffy, Bono, & Yang 2011, Hede 2010, Marianetti and Passmore 2009). Mindfulness practice in work-related situation as a way of improving the wellness and outcomes in the managerial sectors, predominantly in high-stress situations (Davidson, Kabat-Zinn, Schumacher, Rosenkranz, Muller, Santorelli & Sheridan, 2003) and executive management (Miller, 2008). Kersemaekers et al. (2018) demonstrated in their study the "feasibility and effectiveness of a Workplace Mindfulness Training (WMT)" in relations of "burnout, psychological well-being and performance". The particular intervention related with low level in "burnout and perceived stress", increases well-being, and improvement in personal performance. Another study conducted among nurses to discover the effect of MBSR by Cohen-Katz, Wiley, Capuano, Baker, & Shapiro, 2004; Cohen-Katz, Wiley, Capuano, Baker, Deitrick, & Shapiro, 2005) and discovered that MBSR is related to decrease level of "emotional exhaustion", and better sense of individual achievement in their roles among trainees. Another Intervention for call centre personnel in Canada, Grégoire and Lachance (2015) showed that satisfaction level of customers increased after receiving "mindfulness training". This put forward that even a limited increase in "mindfulness" between a working populations can definitely impact organizational achievement. Irving et al. (2009) assessed the effect of MBSR on wellbeing of health care professionals and determined that MBSR improve mental and physical well-being. Aikens et al. (2014) implement seven week mindfulness program in a Dow chemical company and showed the mindfulness training fixed to change in mindfulness, "perceived stress" and exhaustion. In addition the authors also found that possible company investments is up to \$ 22,000 per employee, on the basis of average wages, declines in exhaustion and later potential increase in workforce efficiency. Caldwell, Harrison, Adams, Quin, & Greeson, (2010) in their study shows that "mindfulness training" were related to better sleep quality, fatigue, undesirable stimulation and relaxation. Smith (2014) explored that "mindfulness based stress reduction (MBSR)" is a potential intervention to effectively cope with stress, decrease burnout, anxiety, and increased empathy. Another study conducted by Shapiro & Carlson, (2009) shows that mindfulness can improve person's capability of dealing with pressure in effective manner.

## III. Mindfulness and Workgroup Relations

Boyatzis, 1982; Goleman, 2006; Whetten & Cameron, 2007 conveyed that "mindfulness training" helps in developing better-quality relationship with others at workplace. Another study done by Hülsheger, Alberts, Feinholdt, and Lang (2013) and showed that staff after receiving "self-directed mindfulness intervention" shows more job satisfaction and fewer emotional exhaustion. This improvement of emotion-regulation at work might also help staff improving working relationships. Findings of another study support that role of "mindfulness" supports "emotional regulation" and interpersonal functioning (Amy et al. 2019). Reb et al. (2012) suggested that "mindfulness" helped leaders to build quality relations with their personnel and as a consequence they were capable to support their employee's needs, resulting in better performance, more satisfied employees. Berry et al. (2018) conducted experiment to see whether mindfulness increases prosocial behaviour. The study found that higher mindfulness was significantly associated with higher empathetic concern, more helpful. A study by Arendt, Verdorfer, & Kugler, (2019) was done to examine the role of mindfulness in leader-followers

relations. Results highlight the progressive effect of “mindfulness” at workplace settings means that leader’s mindfulness ability completely associated to follower’s satisfaction with their leaders.

#### IV. Mindfulness and Employee’s Performance

Mindfulness practice shows effect for improving “attention” (Brown & Ryan, 2003; Cahn & Polich, 2006; Schwartz, Davidson, & Goleman, 1978), behaviour self-control and more active objective accomplishment (Brown & Ryan, 2003; Chatzisarantis & Hagger, 2007), all accompanying to job performance. Allen and Kiburz (2012) conducted study to discover the outcome of mindfulness training on working parents and discovered that higher the score on trait mindfulness more the work-family balance. Boyatzis and McKee (2005) found that “mindfulness” supports to perform in correspondence with our values even when the stress is on, for sustaining decent leadership. A study on 84 Australian leaders was conducted by King & Haar (2017) to investigate effect of mindfulness on leader’s performance and result shows that the leaders performance eventually increased who are more mindful and present at work. Weissbecker, Salmon, Studts, Floyd, Dedert, and Sephton’s (2002) in their study said that mindfulness helps individual to perform effectively in high stressful situation. Another study’s result concluded that “workplace mindfulness” is significantly related to the job performance (Erik Dane, Bradley J Brummel 2013). To gain better understanding for mindfulness at workplace a study was done by to find the impact of “mindfulness training” on leaders work lives, their leadership skills. “Workplace mindfulness” training was given to 13 leaders who are working in six different organisations. Based on the findings results revealed the positive impact on self-directing leadership development, leadership capability, mindful task management, self-care and are better able to adapt change (Rupprecht, Falke, Kohls, Tamdjidi, Wittmann, & Kersemaekers, 2019). Another mindfulness intervention was done to check whether an abbreviated “mindfulness intervention” could improve job satisfaction, quality of life among primary care clinicians. Result of the study shows that participants showing reductions in indicators of job burnout, depression, stress. (Fortney, Luchterhand, akletskaia, Zgierska, & Rakel, 2013). Studies by (Kudesia, Baer, & Elfenein, 2015; Moore & Malinowski, 2009; Ostafin & Kassman, 2012; Walsh & Greaney, 2013) infer that applying a mindfulness intervention stimulates an person’s capability for insight problem solving and cognitive flexibility.

#### V. Conclusion

“Mindfulness trainings” are progressively used in “workplace” surroundings in to increase health and efficiency of the employees. Growing number of organizations are implementing “mindfulness training” to cultivating happier, healthier employees who are also more focused, productive, inventive, and efficient. Escuriex and Labbe (2011) assessed the effect of MBIs on healthcare workers and determined that involvement in a “mindfulness programme” enhances psychosocial functioning. Study conducted by Wolever et al, 2012 to find the effective and feasible “mind-body stress reduction in the workplace”. The mind-body interventions indicated meaningful progresses on perceived stress, quality of sleep, and the heart rate and autonomic balance in employees. Stephanie, Bowlin & Ruth, Baer (2012) conducted a study to investigate whether the tendency to mindful in daily life affects the psychological symptoms and wellbeing. Mindfulness was found significantly affecting psychological wellbeing.

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