

Mindfulness affects job performance and outlook

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Abstract

We projected that mindfulness has a negative association with the degree to which workers are usually bored by their occupations by combining previous research on task monotony with existing theory on mindfulness. We projected additionally that this decrease in employee ennui would be related to subsequent outcomes in the form of employment attitudes (such as job satisfaction and intentions to leave the company), as well as task performance. In order to shed light on the intricacy of the relationship between mindfulness and task performance, which has mostly been addressed through the use of subjective supervisor ratings up to this point, we analysed both the objective quality and quantity of task performance. The findings of a study conducted on 174 blue-collar employees working for a Mexican corporation revealed that employee mindfulness was inversely associated to feelings of boredom. In addition, mindfulness had a positive association with work satisfaction and a negative association with intentions to leave a job, with the relationship being partly mediated by boredom. It showed discovered that awareness was a double-edged sword for task performance in boring jobs: mindfulness was positively connected to the quality of task performance, but adversely related to the amount of task performance.

Keywords: boredom, mindfulness, monotonous jobs

Introduction

Work-related stress theoretical models

Because the model that was built for this study is relevant to two distinct theoretical models of job stress, those models were employed. The models were chosen because they were suitable to the model that was developed. Two examples of this category of models include the Cognitive-Transactional Model of Stress (C-TMS), which was established by Lazarus (1999), and the Job-Demands Resources (J-DR) model. Both of these models were developed by Lazarus. The C-TMS model indicates how an employee has a propensity to analyse job expectations, whereas the J-DR model illustrates how an employee is impacted by job demands as well as the resources that are accessible to them. The next section will provide an explanation of these two distinct theoretical models of stress, as well as the model that was utilised for the purpose of this specific inquiry.

Cognitive-transactional model of stress

The stress response known as "fight or flight" may be applied to the workplace utilising Lazarus' (1999) CTMS of stress, which is helpful in this setting (Figure 1). During a main stress appraisal, an employee would perceive a job requirement as either a threat or a challenge, according to the idea that was proposed by Lazarus (1966; 1999). In light of the findings obtained from Lazarus's investigation, this concept was conceived. An individual will do a self-assessment as part of the secondary evaluation, during which they will analyse whether or not they possess the knowledge, abilities, and resources essential to fulfil the criteria of the job. The way in which the employee perceives the demand will, in the end, influence the outcome, which is analogous to the "fight or flight" stress reaction (Gardner, Fletcher, & McGowan, 2006). As a consequence of this, employees may have a range of points of view about the

requirements of their jobs. Individual differences will also play a part in establishing how these demands are judged, which will in turn aid in defining how stress will express itself and what the ramifications will be. Individuals' responses to stress are known to vary widely. For instance, one worker may regard a demand as a challenge, while another person may interpret the identical demand as a danger. This would result in two physiologically differing reactions to stress (eustress and distress, respectively).

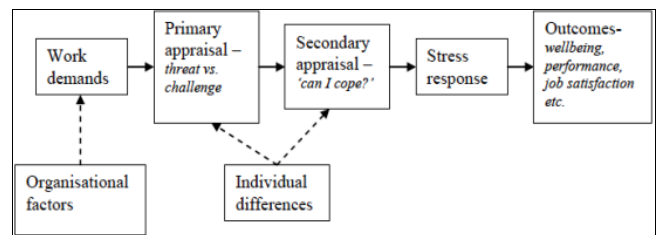


Fig 1: The cognitive-transactional model of stress

This concept is relevant to the study that is now being carried out as a result of the fact that mindfulness has a role in the way in which we experience stress. The practise of paying attention to, and being aware of, the here and now can assist in lowering the amount of automatic thinking that occurs and preventing hasty judgments from being made. An employee who practises mindfulness may be better able to appropriately assess a demand, determining whether it is a threat or a challenge, and taking the time to examine the significance of the need. This is because mindfulness encourages the employee to focus on the present moment rather than dwelling on the past or the future. As a consequence of this, it will be quite interesting to investigate the effect that mindfulness has on the connections between stress and the myriad of outcomes that are connected with being employed.

The job demands resources model

The Work-Demands Resources (J-DR) model demonstrates the links between work needs and available resources, as well as the knock-on effects of these connections. In addition, the model depicts the connections between job requirements and available resources. According to the J-DR model, job demands are aspects of the working environment that are imposed from the outside and call for ongoing mental, emotional, and physical exertion, all of which can contribute to feelings of stress. The rigours of the job include emotionally stressful interactions with clients and management, emotionally taxing work obligations, toxic workplace cultures, employment insecurity, work schedules, business travel, work pressure, and unsupportive work environments.

The model indicates that there is a link between an inadequate supply of resources and an increase in the demands imposed on workers, which in turn leads to undesired effects such as strain. When the demands of an employee's work exceed the resources that are made available to them by their employer, or when the person is expected to achieve those standards despite the employee's own efforts falling short of those requirements, the employee is more likely to experience stress. In addition, stress can have unfavourable effects on organisations, such as lower levels of employee engagement and greater rates of staff turnover. Job resources, on the other hand, have the capacity to function as a buffer and to aid in the process of inspiring workers. Baker and Demerouti (2017) state that resources are defined as protective components that may aid individuals in lessening the demands of their work or coping with the pressures that come along with them. Support, autonomy, and feedback are all examples of potential variables that might act as stress buffers.

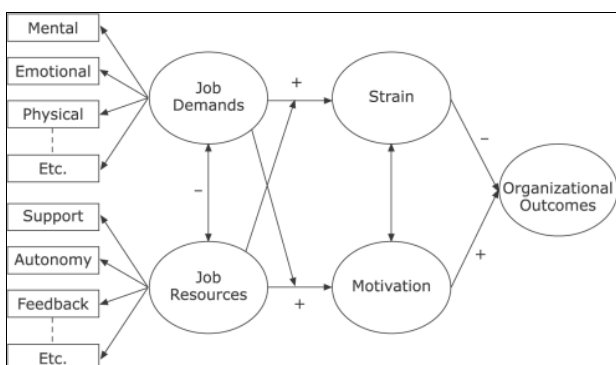


Fig 2: The model of Job Demands and Resources– ‘+’

This paradigm is relevant to the research that is currently being carried out since mindfulness has the potential to serve a function both as a job resource and as a coping tool. Previous research has demonstrated that mindfulness is a helpful resource for stress reduction; however, the area of mindfulness research has not yet conducted any investigations into this potential. Important study to conduct would be to determine whether or not employees can utilise mindfulness as a workplace resource, and whether or not mindfulness may buffer the adverse-affects of stress on favourable organisational results. The current investigation's goal is to collect data that might be used as a foundation for the aforementioned potential areas of focus for further research in the future.

The current study's Model

Mindfulness is a resource that may help employees feel that the expectations put on them are less intimidating, and it can also lower the stress that is linked with the work that they do. It's possible that using a resource such as this one might help promote eustress while also assisting in the reduction of discomfort. A company owes it to its employees to provide them with appropriate resources so that they may positively react to pressures, fulfil the requirements of their tasks, and meet the duties that are put on them. These resources associated with employment are vital for fostering eustress rather than distress in a workplace setting.

Mindfulness may be seen in many different ways, but one of its potential applications is as a tool for overcoming challenging circumstances. To be more specific, it may be used to accurately assess a demand as a threat and to think about acceptable methods to deal with it. Additionally, it can be used to think about acceptable ways to deal with other demands. The cognitive recognition that may be acquired via mindfulness has the potential to, in the event that a stressor is recognised to constitute a threat, activate coping mechanisms, which can aid with the management of stressors. The goal of the current research is to determine whether or not mindfulness can act as a buffering variable in the relationship between stress brought on by one's job and the myriad of negative effects that stress can have on one's mental health, physical well-being, and ability to bounce back from setbacks.

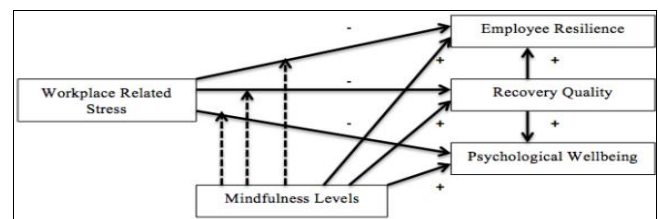


Fig 3: model that has been offered for this particular research – the arrows with solid ends suggest a major effect, while the arrows with dotted ends suggest a moderating link. The plus sign denotes a positive association, whereas the minus sign indicates that the variable relationship is one that is unfavourable

Outcomes of work-related stress

Work-related stress has been found to have a negative association with a range of organisational outcomes, such as employee resilience, the quality of recovery, and overall wellbeing. This was identified through research conducted by the American Psychological Association. The present study is centred on these links, and it investigates whether or not practising mindfulness may help alleviate the detrimental effects that stress can have on specific outcomes. In addition to this, the research will investigate the linkages that exist between the quality of the recovery, the resilience of the employees, and their general wellbeing.

Organizational stress

The pressure that people are under to do well in their jobs nowadays poses a threat to their physical well-being. Work stress is an emotional or physical reaction that a person may have as a result of the fact that the fundamental needs of their job do not connect with the resources and talents that they possess. The name "work stress" alludes to this phenomenon. The physical environment, the social environment, and the psychological environment are the three distinct settings that have the potential to contribute to

an individual's experience of stress in their daily lives. There is a correlation between stress and a number of health issues that are related with employment. These health issues include sickness, early labour turnover and retirement, and poor performance in the workplace. Stress has been linked to these issues.

Although stress has been there since ancient times and is something that everyone deals with, the levels of stress that people are experiencing right now in the 21st century are at an all-time high and have never been seen before in the history of humankind. In the modern world, stress is a significant contributing factor that is responsible for more than fifty percent of all diseases. Situations that cause the body to react with stress can be referred to as stressors. Some examples of stressors are being in a bad relationship, being in a noisy location, or having a very hectic work schedule.

The reaction that an organism has to stimuli from the outside is referred to as its "strain," and it is described using this term. The method in which the body responds to stress may change based on the source of the stress, and different people will come up with unique strategies to alleviate the strain that they are experiencing. Stress is not caused by either the individual or the environment; rather, it is a continuous process that includes an individual's interaction with their cultural and social surroundings. Neither the individual nor the environment is responsible for stress. The individual is able to better deal with the obstacles that are brought to them as a result of this relationship. Stress has the potential to negatively impact a person's mental and cognitive health. The failure to effectively maintain homeostasis is what gives rise to the requirement that homeostasis be restored as it is the root cause of the problem. The manner in which a person examines or attempts to make sense of what has transpired is a crucial component that plays a role in deciding how they will respond to any particular scenario. The risk, complexity, and capacity for damage that may be caused by unfavourable occurrences are analysed and assessed here.

Every person who goes through a stressful situation will end up feeling its repercussions in their own unique way. The term "stress" refers to any and all conditions, both internal and external, that put a person's health in peril or provide them with a challenge. This includes situations in which the individual is the source of the stress themselves. These pressures may have been brought about by environmental, social, or psychological causes. It's probable that all three had a role. These pressures can generate a variety of responses at various times, including emotional, behavioural, physiological, and cognitive responses. One of the primary factors that is involved in stress-related behaviour is arousal, which plays an important role. This is due to the fact that arousal takes place on a physiological level. The hypothalamus is the primary organ in charge of activating both of these distinct pathways.

In the first of the potential pathways, the autonomic nervous system plays a role. Alterations in the physiology of the body are the result of catecholamines being released into the bloodstream by the adrenal gland in considerable quantities. These catecholamines are responsible for the release. Involved in the second route are the pituitary glands, which are the organs that are in charge of manufacturing the hormone cortisol. Cortisol is a hormone that generates energy. The behavioural response is dependent on the nature

of the stressful event, which can come in a virtually limitless number of different forms. When confronted with challenging circumstances, people often experience a range of negative emotions, including anger, sorrow, worry, denial, and humiliation, to name a few. One of the cognitive effects is having trouble focusing as effectively as one would want. Concepts that are distracting, redundant, or morbid in their character. The degree to which a person is able to withstand the negative consequences of stress is mostly determined by the quantity of physiological resilience they possess.

Causes of Stress

The conditions or occurrences that provide a person with an especially difficult test are referred to as stressors.

▪ Factors intrinsic to the Job

There are a lot of different things that might get in the way of employees doing their jobs properly. At work, dealing with issues such as workplace pressure, expectations to meet deadlines, time pressure, an excessive number of decisions to make, lengthy working hours, and excessive commute time.

▪ Role in the organization

According to a notion that was created by Kahn and colleagues in 1964, stress is the outcome of hazy expectations as well as disagreements that happen in the job. When an employee's actions at work are inconsistent, the employee will be in a condition of role conflict, which will generate stress for the employee. According to the findings of previous studies, participation in organisations, which is one of the most important aspects of a functioning social system, may be a possible cause of stress.

▪ Relationship at work

The nature of one's interaction with other individuals who work in the same place of employment can be a stressful factor because it is one of the sources of stress. According to the findings of a research conducted by Selye, one of the most stressful experiences in life is the process of figuring out how to coexist with other people. At work, there are three crucial relationships that might lead to stress: with supervisors, with subordinates, and with co-workers. Each of these relationships is vital in its own right.

▪ Career uncertainty

Stress may be caused by a variety of factors, including concerns about job loss, job security, feeling obsolete in one's position, not receiving enough promotions, and the dissatisfaction of having reached a point of professional stagnation.

▪ Organizational structure and climate

is a component of the working environment that has to be considered. The workplace may be a stressful environment due to workplace politics, inadequate consultation, and inadequate engagement.

"Stress in the workplace may be defined as the adverse emotional and physical responses that arise when the demands of the job do not meet the resources, skills, or

requirements of the worker. This can happen when the person is overworked or under qualified for the position. This may occur if there is a poor fit between the worker's skills and the requirements of the job. The effects of stress at work might range from mental anguish to actual physical damage." (Studies were carried out by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health in Cincinnati in the year 1999).

"The mental, emotional, behavioural, and physiological reaction that happens as a result of unpleasant aspects of work, work organisations, and work surroundings. It is a disorder that is characterised by high levels of worry and agitation, and it is generally accompanied with feelings of helplessness and incapacity to cope with stressful situations." (Guidance on work-related stress: Spice of life - or kiss of death? published by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Employment and Social Affairs)

The relationship between work-related stress and well being

The negative effects of work-related stress on employees' overall health and well-being are well-documented. The number of employees who report experiencing issues with their health as a result of their work environment has been steadily increasing, and this pattern is anticipated to continue. One of the primary factors that leads to burnout is stress at work, which has also been linked to a variety of unfavourable health outcomes, including an increased risk of developing cardiovascular diseases. It has been established that feelings of burnout and bad health have a detrimental influence on one's wellness, which, in turn, can make the effects of stress on employees much more severe.

Because of the influence that stress has, managers should pay extra attention to the potentially harmful effects that stress can have on an individual's health. The response known as "fight or flight" is over activated in a person who is often subjected to several pressures. This results in the individual being more likely to flee from a potentially dangerous situation. Because of this, there is a possibility that high amounts of the stress hormones cortisol and adrenalin will be created as a consequence of this. The fact that managers have a lot of responsibilities and are regularly placed in stressful situations indicates that this is a probable result for people who work in management since it suggests that individuals who work in management are more likely to experience it. It is very uncommon for managers to have thoughts of hopelessness and anxiety when they are under a great deal of pressure at work. As a consequence of this, managers are subjected to challenges that affect both their physical and mental health, which, in turn, can have a negative impact on the managers' psychological well-being.

In spite of the fact that a wide range of facets of wellbeing are covered in the previous research, the focus of the present study will be on psychological wellbeing. For the sake of this investigation, psychological wellbeing may be defined as the degree to which a person possesses positive attributes that contribute to that person's continued psychological growth and development in spite of the challenges that are presented to them by life. The term "wellness" will be used to refer to both a person's physical and mental health from this point forward in this investigation.

It's possible that unfavourable employment-related outcomes might be precipitated by a lack of good wellbeing.

Among these outcomes include low levels of job satisfaction and devotion, unfavourable opinions regarding one's place of employment, high employee turnover rates, and negative attitudes toward one's work. A decrease in an employee's sense of well-being is likely to be accompanied by a drop in both their productivity and their performance while they are on the work. Monitoring the well-being of one's workforce is an absolute need due to the fact that employees' states of health have a substantial impact on the outcomes and levels of productivity achieved inside an organisation.

It is essential to have a good grasp of the healing process in order to enhance the health and well-being of one's employees and to make one's business more successful. In the context of this discussion, the term "recovery" refers to the psychological, social, and physiological processes that occur during the phase of recovery known as "recovery." As a consequence, you will experience a boost in energy as well as a heightened sensation of control over the circumstance. When there are no demands present that are producing discomfort, recovery can take place. This typically occurs during periods like work breaks, vacations, evenings, and weekends. According to Sonnentag, Binaries, and Mojza's research, employees are able to recover through the use of recovery experiences such as psychological detachment, relaxation, sleep, and mastery experiences (2008). (i.e., pastimes or pursuits that an employee can become proficient in outside of the workplace)

In this specific piece of study, psychological detachment and relaxation will be the only two facets of recovery that are going to be investigated. One is considered to have attained psychological detachment when they are able to mentally and physically separate themselves from the environment in which they operate. It is not a specific activity but more of a mental detachment from one's place of employment rather than a physical one. When we refer to activities as "relaxing," what we really mean is that those activities are leisure pastimes with the goal of soothing the mind and the body. Meditation and specific muscle-relaxing exercises are two good examples of this type of activity. It is vital to bear in mind that various people have varying preferences in terms of how they wish to recover from their injuries. For example, one person could recover more quickly by going for a walk, while another might feel better if they engaged in a breathing exercise instead. Both of these activities have the potential to improve one's health.

Conclusion

This vigilance on the part of salespeople may serve as a significant management lever to boost their work happiness and, as a result, reduce the likelihood that they will quit their jobs. Stress at work, levels of job satisfaction, and the desire to leave are important factors to consider for sales managers. For sales managers, the intention to depart is the single most important signal. The immediate prelude to a person leaving their position is the individual's intention to depart. Turnover results in free territory being made available to rivals, and the cost of recruiting and training for a new salesperson is high. Mindfulness offers managers both a potential answer and an innovative new management tool. This study highlights the potential for businesses to benefit from developing mindfulness training programmes for their sales staff in order to minimise turnover intentions.

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