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## MINDFULNESS AND WORK ENGAGEMENT AMONG TEACHERS

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### Abstract

This study investigates the influence of mindfulness on work engagement among teachers. Drawing on a sample of 549 participants (300 males and 249 females), the study employed a quantitative, correlation, and predictive research design. Standardized instruments—the Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS) and the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES)—were used to measure mindfulness and work engagement, respectively. Statistical analysis included Pearson's correlation and multiple linear regression, with gender as a control variable. Results revealed a strong and statistically significant positive correlation between mindfulness and overall work engagement. Regression analysis showed that mindfulness is a strong predictor of work engagement. These findings align with prior research and reinforce the theoretical understanding that mindfulness enhances emotional regulation and focus, thereby boosting engagement. The study highlights the potential of integrating mindfulness-based practices into professional development, particularly in educational settings, and calls for further longitudinal research exploring mediating and moderating variables such as stress and emotional intelligence.

**Keywords:** Mindfulness, Work Engagement, Vigour, Dedication, Absorption

### 1. Introduction

#### Background and Rationale

In recent years, mindfulness has gained prominence as a personal resource in improving employees' psychological and professional outcomes. Mindfulness is generally defined as the state of being fully present and aware of the current moment, approached with a non-judgmental and accepting attitude (Hülsheger et al., 2013). It encompasses attention, awareness, present-focused consciousness, and acceptance, which together contribute to emotional balance and attentional stability in the workplace (Gunasekara & Zheng, 2019).

Work engagement, on the other hand, is a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind characterized by vigour, dedication, and absorption (Schaufeli et al., 2002). These dimensions reflect an individual's energy, sense of purpose, and immersion in work. High levels of engagement are associated with increased productivity, job satisfaction, and retention, making it especially crucial in organizational and educational settings.

In the context of teaching and education, where emotional labor and cognitive demand are high, maintaining engagement becomes critical. Amidst rising stress and burnout rates, mindfulness has emerged as a potential intervention to enhance engagement by promoting emotional regulation and cognitive clarity (Palillo et al., 2021; Chen, Li, & Xing, 2022).

While existing research highlights the general benefits of mindfulness in workplace well-being, there is a lack of empirical studies exploring mindfulness as a direct predictor of work engagement within the education sector, particularly among teachers. Few studies have addressed how mindfulness impacts the specific dimensions of work engagement (vigour, dedication, and absorption) or accounted for demographic control variables such as gender.



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## Mindfulness

Mindfulness refers to a state of conscious awareness in which individuals purposefully focus on the present moment while adopting an accepting, non-judgmental attitude (Kabat-Zinn, 1990). It encompasses various facets, including attention, awareness, present focus, and acceptance (Gunasekara & Zheng, 2019). These components enable individuals to manage emotional responses effectively and remain grounded in challenging work environments. Mindfulness is commonly exercised during meditation and self-awareness practices and can serve as a psychological resource that enhances resilience and attentional control.

## Work Engagement

Work Engagement in Schaufeli and Bakker's conceptualization is a positive and fulfilling state characterized by three key dimensions.

- **Vigour:** High levels of energy and mental resilience at work
- **Dedication:** A sense of significance, enthusiasm, and pride in one's work
- **Absorption:** Being fully concentrated and deeply engrossed in work tasks

In this model, work engagement functions as an outcome of personal and job resources. Since each of these resources can be external or internal, mindfulness researches this perspective as a personal resource influencing emotional well-being and motivational states.

The positive relations between mindfulness and engagement in work are supported by several empirical studies. Gunasekara and Zheng (2019) reveal that all four mindfulness aspects, including attention, awareness, present focus, and acceptance, have a significant correlation with work engagement. Specifically, his or her level of engagement is high in those individuals who exhibit developed attentional skills and a readiness to experience the present moment.

Qing et al. (2024) have gone one more step in the development of this body of knowledge as the researchers analyze the concept of mindfulness as applied to the post-pandemic Malaysian work culture. Their results show that the mindfulness acceptance has the most significant effect on work engagement, then the mindfulness awareness, which confirms the allegation of the necessity of cultivating the emotional flexibility in the liquid professional landscape.

Palillo et al. (2021) have examined mindfulness in a large international sample and note that mindfulness has a substantial lowering impact on perceived stress and a moderate positive impact on engagement, the vast majority of which come as direct effects. At the same time, Chen, Li, and Xing (2022) distinguish between three mediators (i.e., work meaningfulness, emotion regulation, and job competence) through which mindfulness energizes the increased engagement.

Further, Hülshager et al. (2013) demonstrated that mindfulness reduced emotional exhaustion and enhanced job satisfaction, supporting the claim that mindfulness is a powerful tool for emotional regulation and occupational well-being.

Despite growing evidence, most studies have focused on general employees or corporate sectors, with limited emphasis on the **educational context**, particularly teachers. This highlights a **gap in research**, as teaching is a profession with high emotional labor and cognitive demands, where mindfulness may play a critical role in sustaining work engagement.

The current evidence suggests that mindfulness practice promotes internal psychological processes in the form of sustained attention, non-judgmental acceptance, and the capacity to stay in emotional equilibrium, which are strongly related to the



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core facets of work engagement, thus making mindfulness an excellent predictor of the teacher motivation and well-being in the field of professional practice.

This study aims to address this research gap through the following objectives: To examine the relationship between mindfulness and overall work engagement. To examine this objective the following hypothesis is formulated in the present study **H1**: There is a significant positive relationship between mindfulness and work engagement.

## Methodology

A quantitative, correlational, research design was applied to the current study to outline the relation between mindfulness and work engagement. The sample for the present study was 549 (300 males and 249 females), which was randomly selected from different schools located in Hyderabad and Malkajgiri Medchal Districts of Telangana state in India. The data was collected from educational or institutional setting. Two standardized questionnaires, the Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS) designed by Brown and Ryan (2006) to assess the level of mindfulness and the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES), developed by Schaufeli and Bakker (2003) was used to collect the primary data in the study. The data obtained was analyzed using product moment correlation coefficient. The results of the analysis are displayed in table 1

**Table 1: Correlation Coefficients between Mindfulness and Work Engagement**

Variables	Correlation Coefficient	Sig.
Mindfulness	.613	.000
Vigour	.562	.000
Dedication	.453	.000
Absorption	.460	.000

Table 1 presents the Pearson correlation coefficients between mindfulness and various dimensions of work engagement. The results reveal a strong and statistically significant positive correlation between overall mindfulness and total work engagement ( $r = .613$ ,  $p < .001$ ), indicating that higher mindfulness levels are associated with higher levels of engagement. Additionally, mindfulness shows moderate positive correlations with the sub-dimensions of work engagement: vigour ( $r = .562$ ), dedication ( $r = .453$ ), and absorption ( $r = .460$ ) all significant at the  $p < .001$  level. These findings suggest that individuals who are more mindful tend to exhibit greater energy, involvement, and immersion in their work.

## Discussion

The findings of this study reveal that high levels of mindfulness are significantly associated with greater levels of vigour, dedication, and absorption, which are the core dimensions of work engagement. This supports the theoretical proposition that mindfulness, as a personal resource, contributes positively to employees' psychological states and work-related attitudes. The present study is in line with the finding of the past researchers. These findings overlap with those of past literature in regards to Gunasekara and Zheng (2019) and Palillo et al. (2021), who studied that mindfulness improves emotional regulation and reduces stress, in order to increase stronger work engagement and satisfaction. Such stability of results in various settings proves the stability of mindfulness as a psychologically profitable structure.

Practically, the findings have a great application in institutions of learning, particularly the schools and teacher training programs. Implementation of mindfulness-based interventions and education may help the educators to develop the skills of mindfulness, presence in the moment, and emotional stability that will permit them to remain engaged in their jobs in the long term. Additionally, researchers are encouraged to extend this inquiry into diverse sectors and cultural contexts, to explore how mindfulness operates under varying organizational demands and personal circumstances. Despite the strength of the findings, the study has certain limitations. It relies on a cross-sectional design, which limits the ability to infer



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causality. Moreover, the use of self-report instruments introduces the possibility of response bias, and the sample's limited geographic and demographic scope may restrict the generalizability of results.

To build on these findings, future research should adopt longitudinal designs to examine changes in mindfulness and engagement over time and consider additional moderating or mediating variables, such as occupational stress, emotional intelligence, or resilience. Such investigations would provide deeper insights into the mechanisms through which mindfulness influences work engagement and inform more targeted intervention strategies.

## Conclusion

This study explored the relationship between mindfulness and work engagement, with a focus on the dimensions of vigour, dedication, and absorption. The key findings indicate that mindfulness is strongly and positively associated with overall work engagement and its components. These results collectively reinforce the vital role of mindfulness in enhancing emotional regulation, focus, and motivation—factors essential for sustaining high engagement in professional roles, particularly in the education sector.

The study highlights the practical relevance of integrating mindfulness practices into professional development programs, especially for educators and professionals in emotionally demanding environments. Promoting mindfulness through training and institutional support may help build a more resilient, focused, and engaged workforce. These findings support the continued use and study of mindfulness-based interventions as a strategic tool for improving well-being and work performance.

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