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**Mindfulness and Well-being: An Explorative Study on Faculty Members
of the Ramon V. del Rosario College of Business**

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Abstract

Workplace well-being is strongly linked to productivity and performance and thus, organizations need to consider strategies in fostering the former. This paper seeks to explore the relationship of mindfulness levels of employees and workplace well-being. Trait-based individual mindfulness (TBIM) was scored using the Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS). Workplace well-being was scored using the Job-related Affective Well-being Scale (JAWS). It was found that respondents had above average levels of TBIM as well as above average levels of job-related affective well-being (JRAW). Results yielded that TBIM and JRAW were moderately correlated and was not significant. These open new avenues associated to the re-assessment of constructs and measurement which may result in better strategies for further research. While relatively still at its infancy, this study may serve as basis for a rationale for DLSU to conduct further investigation in regards to the place of mindfulness and workplace well-being in the management of human resources.

Keywords: *mindfulness, workplace well-being, trait-based individual mindfulness*

Introduction

Workplace well-being is strongly linked to employee productivity and performance and thus, there is reason to consider strategies in fostering this (Haddon, 2018). Well-being at work is characterized as: “an environment to promote a state of contentment which allows an employee to flourish and achieve their full potential for the benefit of themselves and their organization” (CIPD, 2007, cited by Kowalski & Loretto, 2017). While workplace well-being may manifest itself in the physical or psychological sense, it is in the psychological, or mental dimension of well-being this paper concerns itself with. Workplace well-being moves beyond physical symptoms which are related to health. It does not include context-free measure of life experience (life satisfaction) and keeps itself within job-related experiences. It may also refer to mental, psychological or emotional aspects of workers (War, 1990, cited by De Simone, 2014). Most of the notions of well-being such as quality and safety of work environment, and compensation are relatively easy to observe. Employee mental health or psychological well-being, on the other hand, proves to be more difficult to describe as it is individual and subjective. Psychological well-being at work combines both the levels to which workers "experience positive emotions and the extent to which they experience meaning and purpose in their work" (Taneva, 2016, p. 2). Psychological well-being affects how employees think and feel about their jobs and their organization, which is a good indication that psychological well-being predicts job attitude and performance (Tov & Chan, 2012).

In 2014 Google was named "Best Company to Work For" for the 5th time by the Great Place to Work Institute and Fortune. Google's policy in motivating and keeping its' employees happy was seen as one of its strongest key points. The company's work philosophy is: "To create the happiest, most productive workplace in the world" ("The Google Way of Motivating Employees," 2014). Central to this strategy of improving well-being, is its use of the concept of Mindfulness. Chade Meng Tan and Daniel Goleman, designed a course on mindfulness in 2007. Attendees rave at how they felt calmer, clear-headed, and more focused (Stulberg & Magness, 2017). Tan, an engineer in Google has been recognized in developing the "Search inside yourself" program which is a mindfulness-based intelligence leadership course designed to unlock potential in participants at work and life. Other organizations have recognized mindfulness' potential and followed suit to improve workplace functioning (Jha et al., 2015; Tan, 2012; West et al., 2014; Wolever et al., 2012. cited by Good et al., 2015). Are mindfulness levels of employees correlated with their workplace well-being? Empirically supported benefits of mindfulness include numerous affective benefits (Davis & Hayes, 2011). The paper's objectives are:

- Determine the level of well-being of employees of De La Salle University, specifically the faculty of the Ramon V. del Rosario College of Business.
- Determine the level of individual mindfulness of the faculty members.
- Ascertain if there is an association between individual mindfulness levels of faculty of the Ramon V. del Rosario College of Business and their workplace well-being levels.

Review of Related Literature

Workplace Well-Being

Hiring and maintaining employees means that employers must offer more than tangible benefits such as salaries. Employees desire meaning and personal development (Harter et al., 2002). While there have been other strategies employed by organizations to address performance improvement through workplace strategies instead of those based on workplace well-being, it has been suggested that this perspective may prove challenging. A shift away from workplace well-being may consequently erode confidence among employees as they may perceive that organizations do not fully adequately represent their interests (Brown et al., 2009, cited by Spence, 2015). Harter et al. state that workplace well-being and performance are not independent, but rather, complementary. The presence of positive perceptions and feelings in the workplace are associated with higher employee performance (Harter et al., 2002). Findings of the 2011 Workplace Employment Relations survey sees a clear, positive, statistically significant relationship between the average level of job satisfaction and workplace performance (Bryson et al., 2014). This study conducted presented job satisfaction as an indicator of workplace well-being. The pivotal role of employee's workplace well-being and its influence on performance, and therefore productivity, profitability, and sustainability, lead us to the further study and understanding of quality of work life. As the importance of improving workplace well-being in organizations is gaining in popularity, one strategy involves the concept of mindfulness as a basis for programs in improving workplace well-being.

The Concept of Mindfulness

Medical research suggest that mindfulness techniques have resulted in an increase in well-being and a reduction of stress. There has been an increasing amount of literature regarding mindfulness (Black, 2015, Cited by Good et al., 2015) that suggest the concept entering the mainstream. Mindfulness leads to positive benefits on leadership, employees, and on the bottom line (Schaufenbeuel, 2015). Schaufenbeuel's descriptive study on various corporate organizations proposes that the introduction of mindfulness to the workplace improves listening and decision-making skills, focus, decreases stress levels and elevates overall well-being (Schaufenbeuel, 2015).

Mindfulness

Mindfulness is a state of awareness in individuals distinguished by enhanced attention skills, while maintaining a receptive and non-judgmental perspective to internal and external events (Malinowski & Lim, 2015, Hulsheger et al., 2012). Mindfulness stems from mindfulness meditation, which is a centuries old Buddhist mental training method which alleviates suffering while developing compassion, wisdom, and insight (Silananda, 1990, cited by Janssen, et al., 2018). Mindfulness involves observing and describing, yet not judging and reacting to present experiences (Baer et al., 2006, Cited by Geisler et al., 2018). This moment-to-moment awareness of one's experiences without judgement, is considered as a state, and not a trait (Davis, 2011). Mindfulness has experienced a surge of research activity across several disciplines including; clinical and counseling psychology, neuroscience, medicine, and education (Dane, 2013). This interest often revolves around the study of correlation between mindfulness and psychological and physical well-being (Dane, 2013). In 1989, Langer and Moldoveanu introduced mindfulness into the area of business when they discussed benefits in managers and workers wherein mindfulness was associated with increased creativity and decreased burnout. Weick and Roberts, further pushed the concept in management discourse (Weick & Roberts, 1993, cited by Good et al., 2015).

Mindfulness as Applied to this Study

Mindfulness, specifically that which is rooted in or developed from Eastern perspective may be seen as the best fit in this study as studies of individual mindfulness have shown that mindfulness "curtails negative functioning and enhances positive outcomes in several important life domains, including mental health, physical health, behavioral regulation, and interpersonal relationships" (Vogus & Sutcliffe, 2012, p. 723). The correlation between mindfulness in individuals and well-being has been seen a factor of the upsurge of this concept across several disciplines (Dane, 2013). This study draws heavily on the definition of Glomb et al., (2011) which states that mindfulness is a state of consciousness characterized by receptive attention to and awareness of present events and experiences, without evaluation, judgment, and cognitive filters, which is trait-based as opposed to state which sees mindfulness as a concept which could be cultivated or enhanced through practices and training in individuals (Glomb et al, 2011).

Relationship of Mindfulness and Well-being

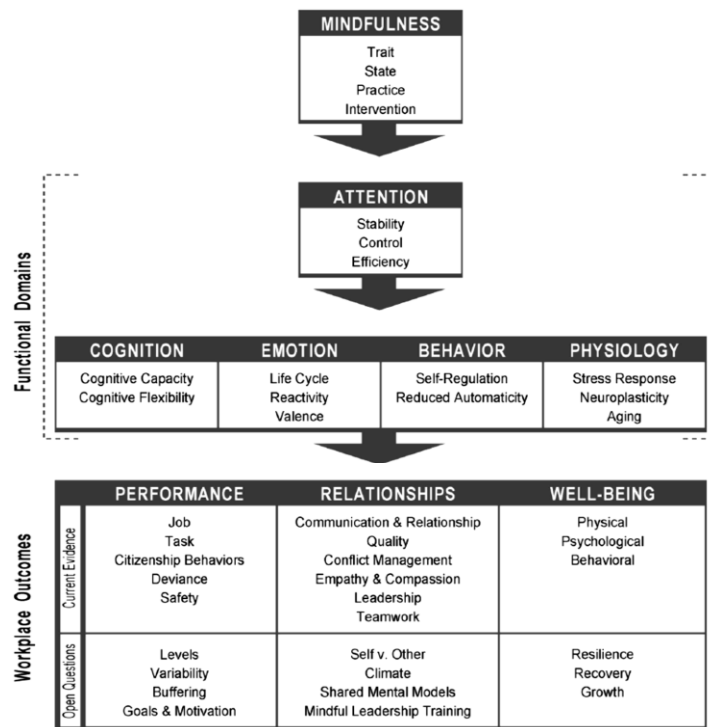
Areas such as medicine, psychology and neuroscience have provided evidence of positive affects towards cognition, emotion, attention, behavior and physiology (Good et al., 2015). The

effects on these aspects have made mindfulness a primary element in various clinical interventions such as serving as a therapeutic tool for medical patients in helping manage chronic illness (Kabat-Zinn, 2003). Meta-analysis research has indicated that mindfulness has a strong effect on well-being outcomes (Eberth & Sedlmeier, 2012). In sum, the present research regarding the effects of mindfulness on well-being, and specifically workplace well-being, offer that a relationship between these two constructs may be present and merit further exploration. This is especially true in contexts still relatively new to the concept of mindfulness, such as business and management research. While studies regarding the effects of mindfulness on well-being may be substantial, it has been suggested that very little empirical research has investigated workplace mindfulness (Dane & Brummel, 2013). What little research done on the relationship of mindfulness and well-being in the workplace also present challenges, as most of the evidence from studies conducted have come from laboratories with non-workplace samples.

Framework and Methodology

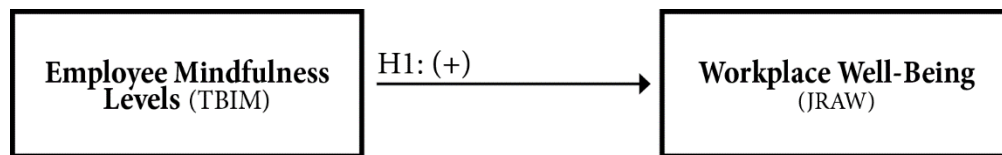
Good et al., in their review article on mindfulness at work, presents an integrative framework of which the report is built around. This framework outlines how mindfulness has impact on functional areas of cognition which in turn influences a wide variety of workplace outcomes (Good et al., 2016), see figure 1. Although there is some evidence of mindfulness and workplace well-being, these have often been derived from studies outside of management (Good et al., 2016). Further study of mindfulness mechanisms and how it influences workplace well-being, may provide fresh insights and open new direction of its study, in management.

Figure 1
Integrative Framework Relating Mindfulness to Workplace Outcomes (Good et al., 2016)



Literature has offered that antecedents for employee well-being include the work setting (Danna & Griffin, 1999, cited by De Simone, 2014). Relationships at work with superiors, colleagues, and subordinates have also presented as having an impact on workplace well-being, as the quality connections is integrally related to well-being (Spreitzer et al., 2005 cited by De Simone, 2014). The core workplace outcome of performance presented by Good et al., may also be categorized as part of the antecedents of well-being as it includes tasks, and jobs assigned to the employee. The objectives of this paper stipulate that the relationship between mindfulness and one of the core workplace outcomes which is well-being is to be explored. At this point the aim is to assess the levels of workplace well-being and levels of trait-based individual mindfulness. This will serve as a jumping off point wherein external forces which affect the other core outcomes such as performance and relationships may be explored in future studies. In sum, this paper draws on the above framework which postulates that well-being (physical, psychological, and behavioral) is a core workplace outcome of individual trait-based mindfulness. Stemming from this rationale, the main theoretical constructs of this study at this point, will only include trait-based individual mindfulness and workplace well-being.

Figure 2
Conceptual Framework



Research Hypothesis

H1: Trait-based individual mindfulness levels amongst members of DLSU RVR-COB faculty are positively associated with levels of their workplace well-being.

Methodology

The object of descriptive research is ‘to portray an accurate profile of persons, events or situations’ (Robson, 2002, p. 59. cited by Saunders et al., 2010) which can be a forerunner of the exploratory domain. A self-report quantitative survey was be utilized to compare and evaluate employees of the Ramon V. del Rosario College of business (RVR-COB) of De La Salle University Manila (DLSU). While the study mostly resides in the descriptive, as the concept of mindfulness and workplace well-being has not been thoroughly investigated in this context, the study is also exploratory. Quantitative methods were employed to see whether correlation between trait-based individual mindfulness and workplace well-being exist in the context of the participants. Non-probability sampling (or non-random sampling) is a technique requires that a sample be selected based on specific objectives and questions raised by the study (Saunders et al., 2010). The selection of samples is largely based on the subjective judgement of the researcher which makes it a good choice for exploratory stages of research (Saunders et al., 2010). It is often subjective and based on what one wants to find out, what will be useful and can be done within one’s available resources (Patton, 2002, cited by Saunders, 2010). The study employed quota

sampling to be able to have a balanced representation of respondents in regards to their traits, characteristics, home departments and others. In the case of this study, I wanted to have a good representation of each department and employee types. In regards to this study, it was proposed that four (4) respondents would be required for each department of the RVR-COB. The criteria for selection included, male or female, any legal age for employment, and having been employed by the RVR-COB from less than a year to eight years and above. From the four (4) respondents, two (2) should be full-time faculty and two should be part-time faculty. It is hoped that this quota sampling may give the study insights on levels of trait-based individual mindfulness and workplace well-being levels in terms of employee type, length of service, and department. As there six (6) departments serving the RVR-COB, a minimum quota of 24 respondents were needed.

Measuring Mindfulness levels and Workplace Well-being levels in Individuals

For this study, the MAAS was chosen as the primary tool to measure the level of mindfulness of subjects. This is primarily because it can be administered briefly, treats mindfulness as a trait and does not require potential subjects to be familiar with meditation (Barajasa & Garrab, 2014) or mindfulness in general. Affective well-being has been weighed as an important component of psychological well-being (van Horn et al., 2004, cited by Russel & Daniels, 2018). The measurement of AWB was conducted by utilizing the Job-related Affective Well-being Scale (JAWS). JAWS, developed by van Katwyk, Fox, Spector, & Kelloway (2000).

The statistical treatment of the gathered data are as follows. Correlation coefficients, mean, and frequency were presented to reflect the summary of the data of the descriptive study. The relationships between the presented variables, based on the responses of the sample population were determined through inferential through correlations. Descriptive statistics from the gathered data were recorded in the results section of the paper along with tables as needed.

Results and Discussion

Table 1
Profile of Respondents

<i>Profile Category</i>	n	%
Gender		
Male	19	90.00
Female	2	10.00
Age		
20-30	4	21.05
31-40	1	5.26
41-50	7	36.84
51-60	4	21.05
61 and above	3	15.79
Department		
Accounting	3	14.29
Commercial Law	0	0.00
Decision Sciences & Innovation	2	9.52
Financial Management	4	19.05
Marketing & Advertising	8	38.1
Management & Organization	4	19.05
Years of Service		
less than a year	4	14.29
1-3	8	0.00
4-7	2	9.52
8 and above	7	19.05
Employee Type		
Full-time	11	52.4
Part-time	10	47.6

Average scores for TBIM and JRAW

The self-report survey indicated that the participants yielded an average score of (M=4.35, SD=.75) for levels of trait-based individual mindfulness. This indicates a higher than average level of TBIM levels found in the respondents. For Job-related affective well-being, participants garnered a score of (M=3.96, SD=.53), a higher than average level for JRAW. Full-time faculty of the RVR-COB had lower JRAW scores (M = 3.88, SD = .65) than part-time faculty (M=4.06, SD=.36), $t(21) = -0.78, p= 0.44$. The difference was not significant. Full-time faculty of the RVR-COB had lower TBIM scores (M = 4.12, SD = .65) than part-time faculty (M=4.6, SD=.36), $t(21) = -1.55, p= 0.14$. The difference was not significant. Overall, Full-time faculty scored lower in terms of TBIM and JRAW as opposed to part-time faculty members. This may be because of the differences in tasks, residency and output that are expected of full-time and part-time faculty. According to the DLSU Faculty Manual (2012-2015), full-time faculty need to render 40 hours weekly workload, which includes a minimum of 12 hours per week dedicated for teaching. Aside from teaching, full-time faculty are expected to add to the research thrusts of the university by presenting, or publishing research papers at least once every academic year. Full-time faculty are like-wise expected to engage in administrative matters within their respective colleges. In contrast, part-time faculty are normally expected to teach for 6 hours a week, and while research is

encouraged, it is generally not mandatory for this employee type. Part-time employees enjoy the privilege of flexibility in working hours as they are only expected to come in during their teaching assignments. Research findings on flexible working conditions afforded workers such as self-scheduling are likely to have a positive effect on well-being (Joyce et al., 2010). These differences between working conditions of the two employee types may imply possible reasons why the results of average scores of TBIM and JRAW are so. From the interpretation of the gathered data, the respondents from the RVR-COB faculty generally had above average levels of both TBIM and JRAW.

Table 2
Ranked Mean of Categories for Trait-based Individual Mindfulness

<i>Category</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	4.35	0.78
Female	4.30	0.52
<i>Age</i>		
60-70	4.98	0.51
50-59	4.37	0.57
40-49	4.18	0.77
25-29	3.82	0.63
<i>Years of Service</i>		
less than 1 year	4.72	0.91
8 years and above	4.66	0.47
4-7 years	4.60	0.42
1-3 years	3.80	0.75
<i>Department</i>		
FMD	4.72	0.93
DSI	4.40	0.66
MAD	4.38	0.93
AC	4.16	0.44
MOD	4.05	0.52

Table 2 presents the ranked mean, in regards to TBIM, of profile categories such as age, gender, years of service, and department respondents belong to. The differences between categories were not significant. Gender ($p=0.92$), years of service ($p=0.10$), department ($p=0.81$), and age ($p=0.15$). The results seem to suggest that older respondents have a higher tendency for TBIM, this reflect earlier research which state that older individuals demonstrate a greater tendency to focus on the present moment (Mogilner et al., 2011, cited by Alispahic & Hasanbegovic-Anic, 2017).

Table 3

Ranked Mean of Categories for Job-related Affected Well-being

<i>Category</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	4.0	0.49
Female	3.63	1.02
<i>Age</i>		
60-70	4.18	0.40
25-29	4.01	0.58
40-49	3.98	0.52
50-59	3.56	0.63
<i>Years of Service</i>		
less than 1 year	4.18	0.30
4-7 years	4.08	0.11
8 years and above	3.94	0.55
1-3 years	3.90	0.67
<i>Department</i>		
AC	4.20	0.53
MAD	4.12	0.50
FMD	3.85	0.67
MOD	3.80	0.27
DSI	3.53	0.88

Table 3 presents the ranked mean, in regards to JRAW, of profile categories such as age, gender, years of service, and department. The differences between categories were not significant. Gender ($p=0.36$), years of service ($p=0.80$), department ($p=0.80$), and age ($p=0.48$). Amongst the 6 departments, the Accountancy Department had the highest average score for JRAW. This may merit additional study regarding practices, and workplace conditions of this department. The above tables report that those who have been employed for less than a year generally have higher TBIM and JRAW scores than their counterparts. A possible explanation of these results may have to do with the tenure curve which has been introduced as a trend in many organizations hoping to understand employee engagement at different points of tenure (Harris, 2017). The tenure curve suggests that employees are at their highest levels of engagement in the workplace at the less than one-year point. This is likely to be related to the novelty and optimism of a new workplace (Harris, 2017).

Test of Relationship

The Shapiro-Wilk normality test revealed that the distribution of JRAW_AVG scores is normal ($SW=.954, p=.416$). The distribution of TBIM_AVG scores is normal ($SW=.977, p=.879$). JRAW_AVG and TBIM_AVG scores for the sample population were moderately correlated, $r(198) = .50$ and were not significant ($p=.02$). The integrative framework by Good et al. from which the conceptual framework of this study was based on, included core workplace outcomes aside from workplace well-being. These are performance and relationships. Though initially this study decided to only include workplace well-being as the main outcome of mindfulness, it may be argued that performance and relationships may have influence and have effect on the overall perspective of workplace well-being in individuals. As the workplace includes one's tasks, job, social interaction, leadership etc., the non-inclusion of these outcomes in accounting for workplace well-being may have affected the lack of correlation results.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study sought to appraise the trait-based individual mindfulness and job-related affective well-being levels amongst the faculty of the DLSU RVR-COB to have a clearer picture of the situation in regards to these constructs. The study was able to meet the objectives of assessing the overall levels of trait-based mindfulness and job-affective well-being. The results ascertained that, no significant relationship has been proven among TBIM and JRAW in the context of the respondents. The results nevertheless, open new avenues in the re-assessment of constructs and measurement which may result in better strategies for further research actions. It is hoped that this appraisal may serve as basis for future studies in the area of mindfulness and well-being in the context of academic organizations. It would be of interest to compare the different results with other similar organizations or other DLSU departments to determine how RVR-COB faculty match in terms of TBIM and RJAW levels. The results for correlation yielded that JBIM has no significant direct effect of JRAW. While the results seem to contradict earlier presented literature, this indicates that some adjustments in the instruments of measurement or the sample population is in order. The measurement of trait-based individual mindfulness is not without obstacles as trait mindfulness is faced with the challenge of respondents measuring a psychological construct which usually manifests itself in the moment. It may be prudent to explore other instruments for measuring TBIM such the five-facet mindfulness questionnaire (by Baer et al. 2006) which follows MAAS in number of Google scholar citations (2,815) (Medvedev. 2017). The limitations on time for administering and gathering questionnaires also led to the fact that the quota for the non-probability sampling method was not achieved. As earlier stated, a minimum number of 24 was proposed for the study. At the end of the timeline for administration and collection of data, only 21 survey questionnaires were returned. As the conceptual framework of this study opted to only include the core workplace outcome of well-being, it is also recommended that the inclusion of the other core workplace outcomes such as performance and relationship as presented in Good et al.'s integrative framework be added to the construct of workplace well-being. These outcomes may together better define the workplace well-being-mindfulness relationship. While relatively still at its infancy, this study may serve as basis for a rationale for DLSU to conduct further investigation in regards to the place of trait-based individual mindfulness and workplace well-being in the management of human resources. The study hopes to gain interest in the humanistic regard of human resources as well-being is tantamount for performance. As the world is currently reeling from the effects of the COVID-19 situation, people are now forced to continue working in the new normal which may increase stress levels and anxiety. As there has been few studies on mindfulness in the workplace, this study may serve as basis for future researchers who wish to further contribute in this particular area towards the improvement of the quality of workplace well-being.

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JOURNAL OF GLOBAL BUSINESS VOLUME 9 ISSUE 1

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