

UNIVERSITAT
JAUME • **I**

MINDFULNESS AND WORK ENGAGEMENT: A THEORETICAL REVIEW

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DEGREE IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

AE1049 – FINAL DEGREE WORK

ACADEMIC YEAR: 2019-2020

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The purpose of this document is to examine how Mindfulness influences employees' Work Engagement. And, increase the productivity of employees and help improve the quality of personal and working life of employees, all with the implementation of Mindfulness in their lives. On the other hand, organizations could also benefit from the implementation of Mindfulness in their companies, since engaged employees are more efficient. The document first tries to analyze in depth the two main terms, Mindfulness and Work Engagement, and then to look for the existing mediators between them and find out how the Work Engagement of employees can be improved through Mindfulness.

Design / methodology / approach: This document represents a theoretical review of the relationship between the terms of Mindfulness and Work Engagement, based on the need to improve the mental as well as the physical health of employees. The document refers to the literature related to both Mindfulness and Work Engagement and the relationship between them, obtained from the Google Scholar database.

Findings: The world of work is constantly changing, more and more demands are made on employees, to have more skills, more knowledge, which can cause stress, anxiety and lead to depression. As a result, in order to successfully overcome the new challenges that arise daily in different jobs, it is important to know how to control impulses and achieve mental balance. The literature emphasizes the importance of Mindfulness in achieving balance among employees so that greater productivity can be achieved and that Work Engagement can be achieved in a healthy and balanced way.

Originality / value: The objective of the following document is, firstly, the analysis of the concepts dealt with, Mindfulness and Work Engagement. And finally to observe what is the relationship between them.

Keywords: Mindfulness, Engagement, Work Engagement.

Type of paper: Theoretical review.

0. PROLOGUE

Before starting the introduction, the reasons for the choice of this topic will be given. Throughout the degree of Business Administration there are hardly any subjects related to Human Resources, so the terms of Mindfulness and Work Engagement are not seen in depth.

There are employees who just want to finish their tasks as soon as possible and go home to disconnect from work. They are employees who are **dissatisfied** with their work and for 8 hours a day do not feel comfortable doing what they do, without motivation, ending up at the end of the week **exhausted**, no longer physically but mentally, all this results in job dissatisfaction, low productivity which impacts on the companies' results. In addition, the employees have repercussions on a personal level.

If there were a way to make employees feel more **engaged** to their work, satisfied with the activities they realized, capable of getting totally involved and wanting to perform at their best, if there were such a way to achieve all that, it would be necessary to enhance it and continue studying it.

Therefore, the following theoretical review is motivated by the need to find a possible solution to this situation and help employees to improve their working and personal lives and, as a consequence, also reflect it at a business level. And a possible solution would be to continue investigating the **positive results** that Mindfulness has for Work Engagement.

1. INTRODUCTION

According to the INE (Instituto Nacional de Estadística), about 30% of all sick leaves in Spain is due to work-related stress or factors related to it. At national level, Spain is one of the European countries with the **most work-related stress** among its employees and at least 40% of employees claim to have experienced it at some point in their working lives according to data provided by the INE.

On the one hand, the AEEMT (Asociación Española de Especialistas en Medicina), shows that the main causes of occupational stress are: uncertainty, job instability and the economic crisis suffered in recent years. In addition, the AEEMT shows that a quarter of all sick leave is due to stress at work.

On the other hand, another national problem is **absenteeism**, which is understood as the habitual abandonment of the performance of functions and activities proper to a position. In numbers, according to a report published by Adecco, in 2018 the loss of hours was 1,350 million and some 753,000 employees who did not work during the whole year.

After seeing the above numbers and observing that stress really is an ailment that can lead to more serious illnesses such as **depression**, action is needed in the workplace. As will be seen in this theoretical review, Mindfulness has great benefits for employees and not only to reduce the level of stress at work, also to reduce absenteeism. So it is an important practice nowadays that is available to everyone and is not complicated to implement in the workplace.

In addition, this theoretical review brings together all of the research that has been done on the subject, providing a shorter overview of the benefits of Mindfulness for employees' mental health. And also get the Work Engagement of these and reduce the current absenteeism.

This theoretical review aims to explore how Mindfulness helps **promote** employee engagement, in addition, to **understanding** the **mechanism** underlying this relationship to get a more accurate view.

The theoretical review is divided into three parts. The first part provides the definition of Mindfulness, taking as reference articles by scientific experts in the area. Continuing to show how the different levels of Mindfulness that persons have is measured with the Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS). Then, different researches are shown where a Mindfulness program is provided to persons with different psychological and

physical characteristics. And the benefits they obtain after the program. And finally, reference is made to the Mindfulness - Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) program with which persons with stress are treated through meditation and anxiety reduction.

In the second part, an introduction is given to the situation of companies today and the different demands made on employees. This is followed by a definition of Work Engagement and its components. And what is the mechanism that is used to measure the Work Engagement of the employees. Finally, a model is described that has great importance for the understanding the functioning of the relationship between Mindfulness and Work Engagement.

In the third part, it already focuses on the analysis of the relationship between Mindfulness and Work Engagement. After the study of the different articles related to the topic, it has been thought convenient to distribute them in different sections. The first section shows the beneficial results obtained for employees in the service sector and for the rest of the employees.

It has been discovered that not only is there an explanation for the relationship between Mindfulness and Work Engagement, several authors have shown that there are different mediators through whom employees increase their level of Work Engagement by means of Mindfulness. And also that Mindfulness could act as a mediator between Work Engagement and other beneficial outcomes for employees.

Finally, the different programs used to implement Mindfulness to employees are shown. In this theoretical review, those results that are negative or not favorable to the purpose of the study of this theoretical review have not been ignored.

2. METHODOLOGY

The Google Scholar database has been used to conduct this theoretical review since it contains the appropriate academic articles for this review. From a total of 100,000 results, it was filtered by the two constructs discussed here, Mindfulness and Work Engagement, which had to be specified in the title of the article, to ensure that the article was related to the objective set.

A total of 47 articles were obtained through the filtration process. Not all of them could be used for various reasons, some were unimportant for this revision and were discarded, and others were impossible to access because they belonged to a journal to which access was restricted. After the articles passed several filters, the theoretical review realized with about 30 articles that can be seen in the bibliography.

But more articles were needed to give an exact definition of Mindfulness and Work Engagement. For them, two more searches were completed and those articles that had been used most for their definition were selected.

In addition, some articles that were available in the database of the Universitat Jaume I were also used. Furthermore, statistics were also taken from the National Statistics Institute (INE) database on the level of stress of employees or the number of leaves of absence from work caused by work-related stress, and this was used for the introduction of this review.

Therefore, this document has focused on reviewing the literature related exclusively to analyzing and explaining the relationships between Mindfulness and Work Engagement. In addition, it has also been wanted to deepen in the definitions of the two constructs treated in this work, in order to better understand the relations that the different studied authors propose.

3. MINDFULNESS

The following section will first focus on giving a definition of the term "Mindfulness", what its origins are and how it is defined by different authors. Next, the role of the scale in measuring the level of attention of individuals will be emphasized. This is followed by a review of the different articles, showing the importance of Mindfulness for employees and their health. Subsequently, the program that Kabat-Zinn and others (1992) created for the reduction of stress is discussed. And finally, there is a type of Mindfulness intervention that is implemented in the workplace.

3.1. Definition of Mindfulness

Don't stay in the past. Don't dream of the future. Focus your mind on the present moment. – Buddha

From the term "Mindfulness" it is complicated to extract an exact definition, in fact the experts of the subject are continuously investigating about it and giving new approaches to its definition, also it is not completely known which the origin of the word "Mindfulness" is. But what is clear is that in the last 30 years, psychological and medical research related to Mindfulness has increased exponentially.

To verify this, if performed a Google Scholar search (defining that the word "Mindfulness" appears in the title of the articles) which is a specialized search engine that allows you to locate documents of an academic nature, it is observed that in 1990 we have a total of 29 results for this search, whereas if another search is made with the same data for the year 2019 we get 4,000 results. Therefore, it reflects the **relevance** and **interest** that the Mindfulness has acquired in the last 30 years.

Regarding the origin of the concept of Mindfulness, its origin is more related to the **Buddhist culture** and it is the commonly thought, but it is also believed that it shares its roots with a diverse variety of philosophical and psychological traditions, such as Greek philosophy, some of the features of European and also American thought (Brown, Ryan and Creswell, 2007).

Concerning the definition of the term Mindfulness, it is believed that it comes from the word Pali Sati. Pali was the language of Buddhist psychology 2,500 years ago and

Mindfulness was the central teaching of that tradition. On the other hand, Sati is understood as awareness, attention, remembrance (Germer, 2004).

At present, the definition most accepted by academics is the following: Mindfulness is conceived as a state of **open consciousness** and **receptivity** to the experience and events that are occurring at the **present** time (Brown and Ryan, 2003). This definition of Mindfulness by Brown and Ryan (2003) treats attention as a trait whose main characteristic is to focus attention on the present.

But also in their article Baer, Smith and Allen (2004) they define it as a construct with different components, integrated by different characteristics such as **observation**, acting with **awareness**, **non-evaluation** and **acceptance**.

The two definitions above classify Mindfulness as a trait, which can either be single or multi-sided (e.g. traits can also be: personal safety, extroversion, domination). On the other hand, there is another definition made by another prestigious researcher in which Mindfulness is determined as a quality, more like a **state**, that persons can intentionally cultivate (Bishop et al., 2004).

Therefore, a different way of expressing the definition of Mindfulness is observed. Some authors believe that Mindfulness is an innate characteristic that each person carries within him or herself, and instead we have other authors who think that Mindfulness is a trait that persons can train and that can be improved with practice.

3.2. Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS)

Before starting to describe the scale of measurement of the level of Mindfulness of each individual, an introduction will be made with the two terms that have great importance in this scale. To begin with the definition, one must know that consciousness involves both awareness and attention.

If it focuses on the first term, **awareness** is the background, the "radar" of consciousness, which is continuously monitoring both the internal and external environment of individuals (Brown and Ryan, 2003).

On the other hand, there is attention and awareness, two terms with different definitions. A simple way to explain these terms is when we find that the brain is paying

attention to something we have around us but the person is not really aware that it is there.

For example, if you're doing a job sitting at a desk paying full attention to writing and the curtain moves, it looks like you're not paying attention to it but your brain is immediately aware of it and lets you know it. Mindfulness means **greater attention** and **awareness** of current experience and **present reality** (Brown and Ryan, 2003).

Brown and Ryan (2003) developed a method for measuring the Mindfulness a subject has in a given period of time, the Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS). This scale focuses on **measuring** the level of attention or awareness in the present moment. The higher the score obtained by individuals, assumes that the person has a greater ability to pay attention in a fuller and more conscious way. The questionnaire that Brown and Ryan (2003) prepared can be seen in table 1 below.

Table 1: Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS)

1. I could be experiencing some emotion and not be conscious of it until some time later.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. I break or spill things because of carelessness, not paying attention, or thinking of something else.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. I find it difficult to stay focused on what's happening in the present.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. I tend to walk quickly to get where I'm going without paying attention to what I experience along the way.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. I tend not to notice feelings of physical tension or discomfort until they really grab my attention.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. I forget a person's name almost as soon as I've been told it for the first time.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. It seems I am "running on automatic" without much awareness of what I'm doing.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. I rush through activities without being really attentive to them.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. I get so focused on the goal I want to achieve that I lose touch with what I am doing right now to get there.	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. I do jobs or tasks automatically, without being aware of what I'm doing.	1	2	3	4	5	6
11. I find myself listening to someone with one ear, doing something else at the same time.	1	2	3	4	5	6
12. I drive places on "automatic pilot" and then wonder why I went there.	1	2	3	4	5	6
13. I find myself preoccupied with the future or the past.	1	2	3	4	5	6
14. I find myself doing things without paying attention.	1	2	3	4	5	6
15. I snack without being aware that I'm eating.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Source: Brown y Ryan (2003)

In that article, Brown and Ryan tried to investigate the relationship between Mindfulness and well-being, as they argued that Mindfulness is an attribute that varies between persons and within the person and studied the importance of the two forms (interpersonal and intrapersonal) of variation for well-being. This is where the MAAS measurement scale gained importance because the aim was to get it **to predict mood changes** and **stress** in some cancer patients.

After completing the study they concluded that MAAS is a **valid way** to measure a subject's level of consciousness at different times (Brown and Ryan, 2003). An example of this is found in the research realized by Dobkin (2008) where he validated the scale stating that it was a useful measure to evaluate the changes of Mindfulness in women who had finished the treatment against cancer.

On the other hand, in another study realized by Kotzé and Nel (2016), in which their objective was to compare the reliability and validity of two Mindfulness measurement scales such as the Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS) and the Freiburg Mindfulness Inventory (FMI), in the short version of both.

The researchers aimed to find out which of the two scales was best able to measure Mindfulness in the workplace. The results showed that the **MAAS** measurement scale is a **better choice** for measuring Mindfulness in the workplace, given its ability to better predict Work Engagement and burnout than the FMI (Kotzé and Nel, 2016).

This confirms the reliability of the Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS) and its importance for research into Mindfulness related practices.

3.3. Mindfulness at work

The following section will focus on the analysis of some of the studies conducted by researchers with a significant impact on Mindfulness research and its effect on employee outcomes.

The study by Reb, Narayanan and Ho (2013) examined how employee **awareness** and **distraction**, two aspects of Mindfulness, are related to employee **well-being** and **performance**. Another objective was to find out which **workplace conditions** help employees to have a higher level of awareness at work, e.g. routine tasks, control of supervisors, organizational constraints, autonomy available to employees. After collecting all the relevant information from the analyzed employees and having

collected the results on the level of routine tasks, the results showed that the **Mindfulness** of the employees is **beneficial** to their **well-being** and **performance**. And that **organizational support** is an essential factor in creating a good working environment and increasing employee Mindfulness.

So in this research, the importance of Mindfulness in employees is demonstrated. **Mindfulness** has the potential to **increase labor performance**, which is turned into increased performance at the organizational level, with better results and greater benefits for the company. In addition, Mindfulness improves the well-being of employees and prevents fatigue at work.

The study by Hülshager et al., (2013) also investigated the benefits of Mindfulness at work. In this occasion, the sample taken from employees was from the **service sector**. In this research, researchers studied the role of Mindfulness on the level of emotional **burnout** and **job satisfaction**. This study also shows the importance of Mindfulness in promoting job satisfaction and helping to prevent emotional burnout in service sector employees.

These conclusions are of significant importance, more so for a country such as Spain, where one of the main sources of income is tourism, which has a strong relationship with the service sector. Consequently, it has a large number of employees working in the service sector who are subject to situations that are highly emotionally charged. Mindfulness could lead to lower burnout rates. Therefore, the importance of Mindfulness for employees working in front of the public is demonstrated.

To conclude with this section, another investigation performed by Hülshager et al. (2014), studied two important aspects for the recovery of employees, which are **psychological detachment** and **sleep quality**. Psychological detachment refers to an employee's ability to disconnect from work when away from it and good sleep quality helps to improve recovery after a day's work. So the aim of this study was to determine if Mindfulness helps the recovery process by promoting psychological detachment after work, thus helping to improve sleep quality and avoid ruminative tendencies. The results showed that persons who are **more attentive** during the working day have a greater capacity to detach themselves from work and **sleep better**. So Mindfulness not only helps employees to be more productive, it also helps to maintain good employee health, hence the importance of good quality sleep.

The aim of this section was to explore a few more aspects of the impact of Mindfulness on the workplace and on employees. And not only focus on getting the engagement of

employees at work, also demonstrate the importance of Mindfulness for other work environments and for employees.

3.4. Mindfulness - Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)

Kabat - Zinn (1992) did a study to determine the level of effectiveness of a stress reduction program consisting of meditation to treat persons with **anxiety**. Kabat-Zinn was the first to propose measures to correctly evaluate both panic attacks and anxiety symptoms. He chose Mindfulness to address these issues because it is an activity that can be **more acceptable** and **accessible** to a wide variety of persons with different lifestyles and different medical conditions. So it was a clinical program that was initially aimed at medical treatment.

The aim of that first research was to test whether a stress reduction program for persons with anxiety disorder was really effective. A control was realized weekly, before the treatment and after the treatment, comparing it with a group of patients who did not realize the program but who were also evaluated at the beginning and at the end of the program.

The program consisted of an 8-week course with weekly 2-hour classes and an intensive 7.5-hour session towards the end of the course. When the results were analyzed at the end of the course 90% of the participants improved their anxiety and panic attack scores, after three months these results were still maintained. And the benefits of Mindfulness in these persons did not stop there, Kabat-Zinn after 3 years re-evaluated the participants' anxiety levels and noted that the positive benefits of the course held years ago had been maintained.

An example of the use of the Mindfulness - Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) program, is found in the research conducted by Dobkin (2008), where women who had completed breast cancer treatment were subjected to the MBSR program. Measuring the changes during the program with the MAAS measurement scale described above. The results obtained at the end of the program are that women felt a **reduction** in **stress**, seeing life in a more **meaningful** and **manageable** way.

Finally, do not forget a study conducted by Van Dongen *et al.*, (2016) where the objective of this research was whether a Mindfulness intervention in the workplace was really profitable in **economic terms** for the organization, the study was conducted in two research institutes in the Netherlands. A CEA and ROI analysis was conducted

comparing the Mindfulness intervention with the practice performed by the employees on a typical day.

The company's costs per employee were estimated at EUR 464. After 12 months it was concluded that **profitability** was **low** and that the intervention in Mindfulness did not have a positive financial return for the company. Therefore, this study does not provide any evidence that it is beneficial to implement a Mindfulness intervention in the companies. One of the reasons they give for this adverse outcome is that it is probable that the participants did not completely integrate Mindfulness practices into their daily working lives in order for it to have an effect in those 12 months.

4. WORK ENGAGEMENT

In the following section, firstly, an introduction will be made to the term "Work Engagement", where it will be possible to observe the change made in the organizations. Then, it will proceed to give the formal definition of Work Engagement and the different components that form it. Below is the scale on which the level of engagement of employee to their work is measured. And finally, there is the Job Demands - Resources model, which is very important for understanding the term mentioned in the section.

4.1. Introduction

The type of employee that companies recruit for their organization has changed in recent years. Nor should it be forgotten that companies themselves have also experienced organizational changes. These changes in working life can be seen in table 2 below, taken from the article of Schaufeli (2013).

Table 2: Evolution from traditional to modern organizations

Organizaciones tradicionales	Organizaciones modernas
Stable environment	Continuous change
Monoculture	Diversita
Individual work	Tema work
Dotal Job descriptivos	Job Crafting
Vertical hierarchy	Horizontal networks
External supervision & control	Self-control & empowerment
Dependence on organization	Own responsibility
Fixed schedules & patterns	Boundarylessness
Physical demands	Mental and emotional demands

Source: Schaufeli (2013)

This table, taken from Schaufeli (2013), compares how organizations have evolved through the ages. Organizations have gone from being in a **stable** and fixed environment to a very different one that is **continuously changing**. Where the culture of the company was formerly **rigid** and imposed by one person, the boss, and has come to search for the **diversity** of persons in the companies and thus bring different points of view. In the past, work was done **individually** and each person was responsible for the success or failure of their work. Nowadays, companies are looking for employees who know how to work in a team and in a **collaborative** way.

Nowadays, each employee is free to "build" his or her own work and thus adapt to the form of being of each employee, this is called **Job Crafting**. In traditional organizations, the way of working was rigid, without differentiating the needs of each employee or their needs. There has been a change from a **vertical structure** with descending orders, to a **horizontal structure** where information flows perfectly between the different areas of the company and there is no formal hierarchy.

Employees have gone from having fixed control of their supervisors to being self-controlled in their jobs (**employee empowerment**). They have been given more freedom over their responsibility without depending on the organization; they have gone from looking for a physically strong and resistant employee to looking for employees for what they can bring to the company in a more intrinsic way.

This transition in the type of employees demanded by companies towards employees who can think for themselves and in which the responsibility for the success or failure of their work resides with them, can lead to states that could be both of **engagement** with their work or end up totally **exhausted**, this theoretical review will focus more on the study of Work Engagement. The end result is that the employee's psychological capabilities, including their motivation, are more seriously compromised than in the past. Instead of simply carrying their bodies, employees in modern organizations carry their whole person into the workplace (Schaufeli, 2013).

4.2. Definition of Work Engagement

The definition of Work Engagement that is most accepted by the majority of researchers was given by the researcher Wilmar Schaufeli in his investigation published in 2002. Schaufeli is one of the most important researchers on Work Engagement and has more than 500 articles published to date in the field of psychology. Therefore, his publications will be taken as a reference to give the most appropriate definition of Work Engagement.

Work Engagement may be defined as a **positive** and **affective-motivating state** of accomplishment characterized by **vigor**, **dedication** and **absorption**. Furthermore, Work Engagement is more than a momentary and specific state; it is **more persistent** and **prolonged** in time that does not focus on any particular object, event, individual or behavior (Schaufeli et al., 2002).

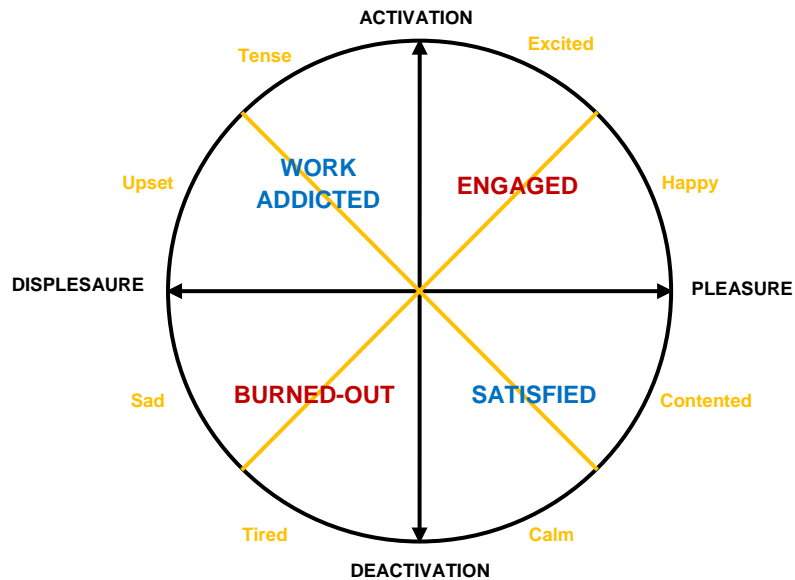
In the study by Schaufeli et al. (2002) it was shown that Work Engagement is the **antithesis** but in a positive sense of burnout. Therefore, an employee who is not burned out could have low or high Work Engagement results, and the same could happen in the opposite way, even if an employee had a high Work Engagement could have high or low burnout results.

Engaged employees are characterized by being **active**, believing in themselves, they are the ones who generate their own positive feedback, the values they possess are the same as those of the organization and despite feeling tired after work they feel **satisfied** and also continue their work externally beyond the workplace (Schaufeli et al., 2002).

Illustration 1 below shows a classification of employee-related well-being. This figure shows that all the emotions that employees may have can be drawn in a circle, divided

into two dimensions ranging from activation to deactivation and from pleasure to displeasure.

Illustration 1: Classification of employee well-being.

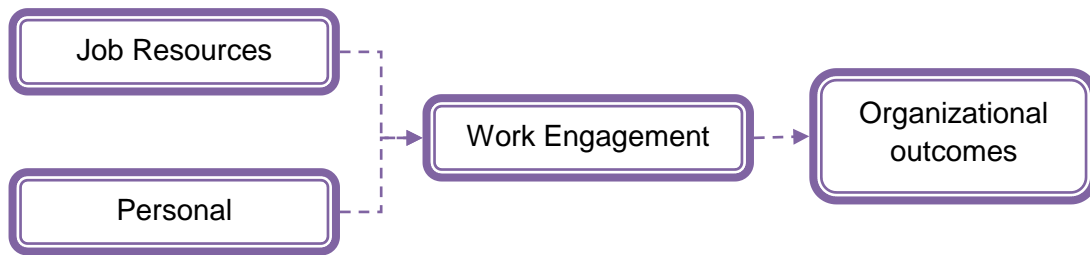


Source: Adapted from Russell (2003)

In this model, an employee may experience negative feelings such as sadness or tiredness, which would be in the area of burnout. Or also, calm or contented and be satisfied with their work. Also, excitement and happiness therefore the employee would be engaged in his work. And finally, if the employee feels tension or worry he would be defined as an employee addicted to work.

To continue with the definition of Work Engagement, Illustration 2 below shows that Work Engagement is considered as a **psychological state** that **mediates** the relationship between **job resources**, **personal resources** and in the **outcomes** of the organization (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2010).

Illustration 2: Antecedents and outcomes of Work Engagement



Source: (Schaufeli, 2013)

This model is supported by research from a variety of Work Engagement researchers, and therefore reflects the flow by which organizations could benefit from the engagement of their employees and improve their organizational outcomes.

4.3. Components of Work Engagement: vigor, dedication and absorption

In this section, the definitions of the three constructs that make up Work Engagement (vigor, dedication, absorption) will be given, which are the following:

- **Vigor** refers to high levels of energy and resistance, the determination to invest effort in work itself, not tiring easily and persistence in the face of difficulties (Schaufeli et al., 2002).
- **Dedication** refers to strong engagement to their own work, accompanied by feelings of enthusiasm and meaning, and a sense of pride and inspiration (Schaufeli et al., 2002).
- **Absorption** is a pleasant state of total immersion in the work, which is characterized by the rapid flow of time and the impossibility of being separated from the work (Schaufeli et al., 2002).

4.4. Work Engagement scale: Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES)

As previously mentioned Work Engagement and burnout are opposing concepts and must therefore be measured independently and with different procedures. Focusing on how to measure Work Engagement, there is a **scale** for **measuring** the **level of employee engagement**, called the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (**UWES**). Given the above definition of Work Engagement, Schaufeli developed a questionnaire consisting of the three constituent components: vigor, dedication and absorption.

For the evaluation of employees' **vigor**, they are asked about 6 different items that vary depending on the employee's energy level and persistence. These are:

1. In my work I feel full of energy.
2. I am strong and vigorous in my work.
3. When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work.
4. I can continue to work for long periods of time.
5. I am very persistent in my work.
6. Even when things are not going well, I keep working.

The employees, who present high levels of vigor, are employees who put a lot of **energy** into the performance of their work, are **persistent** persons who in spite of possible adversities do not surrender and always want to give the best of themselves. And if, in contrast, they get a low score, they are employees who do not put energy into performing their tasks and are not persistent in their work.

In the evaluation of **dedication**, five items are evaluated, to find out if the employee feels enthusiasm with the work, proud or challenged by it, these items are:

1. My work is full of meaning and purpose.
2. I am enthusiastic about my work.
3. My work inspires me.
4. I am proud of the work I do.
5. My work is challenging.

When an employee obtains a high level of dedication to his or her work, it is understood that it has great meaning and is a challenge every day, and he feels **proud** and **inspired** by the work he or she does. On the other hand, if the level of dedication

is low, the employee is not proud of his or her work, and is neither inspired nor challenged by it.

Finally, for the evaluation of **absorption**, 6 items are used in which it is seen if the employee is immersed in his work and manages to forget about the rest of the stuff. These items are as follows:

1. Time seems to fly when I am working.
2. While I am working I forget everything that is happening around me.
3. I am happy when I am absorbed in my work.
4. I get carried away by my work.
5. It is difficult for me to disconnect from my work.

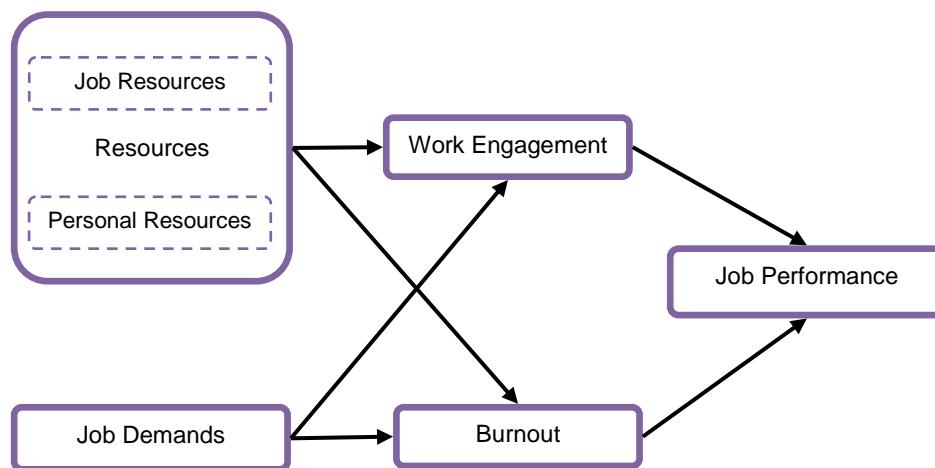
When an employee obtains a high level of absorption for their work, these employees prefer to do their job rather than other activities, as they are **content** to work and are able to be totally **immersed** in their tasks and find it difficult to disconnect from their work. On the contrary, if low levels of absorption are obtained, the employee does not feel content with his or her work and wishes to spend his or her working day as soon as possible in order to be able to disconnect completely.

The above information is taken from the manual written by Schaufeli and Bakker (2004). In this manual the concept of Work Engagement is elaborated in detail, the development of the UWES is explained, and the scale and psychometric qualities of the UWES are validated.

4.5. Job Demands - Resources Model

As previously mentioned, Work Engagement and burnout are two opposing aspects, so the Job Demands - Resources Model is the most used as an explanatory framework for the operation of Work Engagement, since both constructs are included in the model. The Job Demands - Resources Model can be seen in Figure 3 below.

Illustration 3: Job Demand - Resources Model



Source: Schaufeli (2013)

On the one hand, are the **job resources**, which are the resources that the employee has at his disposal in the workplace to **achieve the objectives** established. Job resources may reduce job demands or stimulate the employee's personal growth and development (such as employees having self-control over their work, feeling accepted by their coworkers and feeling feedback on their efforts).

On the other hand, there are the **personal resources** that are the characteristics that each employee has to overcome complicated circumstances (**resilience**) and that allow them to have the ability to control and influence the environment in a successful way. Among some personal resources are: empathy, self-confidence, emotional intelligence, emotional stability.

These resources lead to a more **persistent** and **focused** workforce, so the resources encourage engagement in the form of vigor (energy), dedication (persistence) and absorption (focus). If the model is examined, Work Engagement is understood as the intermediary between resources and positive outcomes.

At the base of the figure is a negative process of deterioration of the employee's health. **Job demands** are all those activities that suppose a mental or physical effort to the employee that is maintained over time (such as the impossibility of reconciling work and personal life, conflict with the employer or with the rest of the employees, lack of motivational activities). When the **recovery** after these job demands is **inadequate** or **insufficient**, they can lead the employee to situations of job burnout that can result in **low job performance**.

Finally, **cross-links** are found between the process of **motivation** and the process of **health deterioration**. This is possible when there is a lack of resources (both personal and job-related) and may lead to burnout. For example, if an employee lacks emotional stability, he or she may not be able to handle the most stressful moments at the workplace.

Also, it is noted that the demands of work may result in an increase in employee participation in the workplace. This is only possible, however, in the case of so-called "**challenge demands**" that have the potential to promote mastery, personal performance and future earnings (e.g. time pressure, high workload and high work responsibility) (Schaufeli, 2013).

In conclusion, **engaged employees** are beneficial to companies, as engaged employees are **proactive, take initiative** and have the ability to **anticipate future problems**. These types of employees prefer to set themselves higher objectives; they feel like persons with enough capabilities to achieve any objective. They are intrinsically motivated, for them work is a leisure activity. They are affable with their coworkers and know how to work as a team. They are also positive in any situation and are capable of processing information more efficiently.

5. MINDFULNESS AND WORK ENGAGEMENT

In this last section, the different relationships between Mindfulness and Work Engagement will be seen. The benefits of Mindfulness for employees in different sectors will also be seen. The different connectors that make possible the relationship between the two constructs analyzed throughout the work. Furthermore, it will also be seen the use of Mindfulness as a connector to obtain the benefits. The different programs used to make a Mindfulness intervention in the workplace. And finally, all those investigations that have not obtained positive results have not been ignored either.

5.1. Mindfulness and Work Engagement: benefits for employees.

In the following section, the different studies performed by the researchers will be presented, in which the relationship between Mindfulness and Work Engagement for

employees and the benefits obtained from these studies are examined. The section includes research related to employees in the service sector, such as teachers and health employees. And finally there will be the benefits that other employees in other sectors obtain from Mindfulness.

5.1.1. Employees from the service sector.

This section starts with those investigations performed that are related to studies of Mindfulness and Work Engagement in employees of the service sector. The section is composed of three articles, the first of them Atkins, Hased and Fogliati (2015), to continue with Silver et al. (2018) and finally Coe and Salanova (2018).

In Atkins, Hased and Fogliati's (2015) study, the aim was to analyze if the improvement in the **teachers'** level of **Mindfulness** will increase their engagement in the job, and as a result, if it will increase their **well-being** and **productivity** for both teachers and other employees.

This research was proposed by the Australian National University itself, after it introduced Mindfulness into its professional development offer. The objective was to find out whether the training courses were successful for teachers and other members of the workforce. This article considers **other mediating factors** that they believe could be related to the improvement of teachers' well-being and performance at work, these factors are **autonomous motivation** and **Work Engagement**.

Autonomous motivation is a phenomenon in which persons act because they believe in the value of the task or find it **intrinsically interesting** or **pleasant** (Atkins, Hased and Fogliati, 2015). The **results** of this research show that Mindfulness training can make participants **increase the level of well-being and Work Engagement**, in a cost-effective and quick manner. And the results are maintained over the next six months of the Mindfulness training.

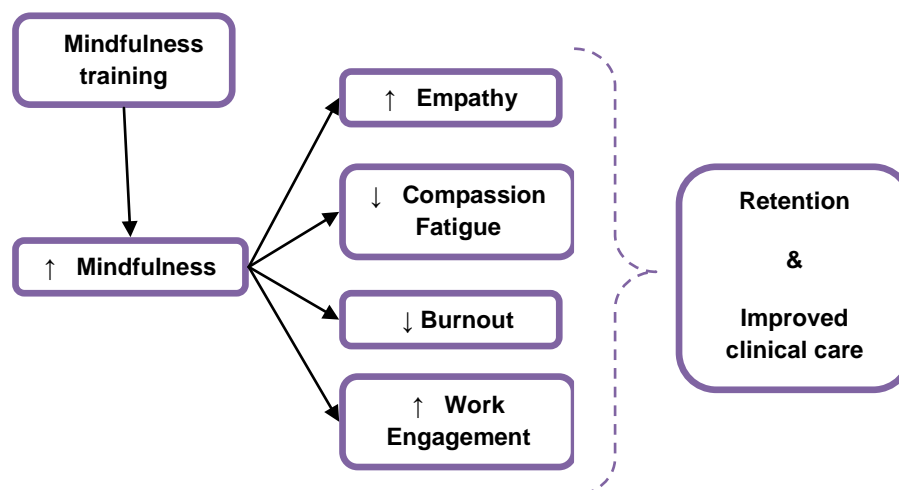
In addition, this study shows that Mindfulness can improve the sense of vigor, dedication and absorption in work, that as is already known, these are the variables of Work Engagement. Finally, they obtained evidence that the mediator between Mindfulness, teachers' well-being and performance, would be mediated by Work Engagement and not by autonomous motivation.

To continue with other research, in the study conducted by Silver et al. (2018) the persons who participated were **health professionals**, more precisely genetic consultants. This type of health care provider can suffer from so-called "**empathic burnout**", this happens when persons work with patients who are suffering. These situations may lead to **burnout** and have negative repercussions on the care of patients. Furthermore, problems of retention of health professionals, and that they prefer to perform other non-health related activities.

The aim of this study was to analyze the **relationship** that **Mindfulness** had with **burnout, compassion fatigue, Work Engagement** and **empathy**, and which are both positive and negative results often obtained by healthcare professionals after a day of work in the hospital. The analysis of the results revealed that Mindfulness correlated positively with Work Engagement.

In other words, this is a very important result since **Mindfulness will improve professional morale and well-being among health professionals** (Silver et al., 2018). It is an advisable option to improve clinical care for patients and ensure good health for those who care for persons in a more vulnerable situation (Silver et al., 2018). Figure 4 below shows the main conclusions drawn from the article in a graphic and summarized form.

Illustration 4: Graphical representation of the relationships between the main study variables



Source: Silver et al., (2018).

To conclude this section, an example of the use of the Mindfulness Based Intervention (MBI) program described above will be shown. This example of MBI can be found in the research developed by Coe and Salanova (2018), where they performed a test in a Spanish public hospital.

The objective of the implementation of the **MBI** program was **to promote the psychosocial health** of the hospital health professionals. A total of thirty-four health professionals participated, including the program participants and the control group. The MBI program implemented to the health professionals was one of the **short versions**, with only three sessions of 150 minutes. In this research, it was analyzed how the **Mindfulness** had **effects** on the **level of happiness**, the **Work Engagement** and the **performance** of the health professionals.

The conclusions of this research were that even the **shortest** Mindfulness Based Intervention (**MBI**) programs also **produce effects**. In this occasion, it increased the levels of all the analyzed variables (attention, happiness, Work Engagement and performance) in the employees who completed the program in comparison to the control group. This proves again the importance of the application of Mindfulness in health professionals and the benefits it has for them and their patients.

5.1.2. Other employees

In the following section, the different studies developed by the researchers will be explained, in which the relationship between Mindfulness, Work Engagement and other variables considered will be analyzed. Two articles will be included, the first by McGregor and Kennedy (2015) and the second by Wiroko and Evanytha (2019). On this occasion, the articles analyzed do not have health sector employees as a sample.

In the study by McGregor and Kennedy (2015), it was analyzed if **Mindfulness** is in charge of **increasing Work Engagement, reducing job related stress** and other variables related to work stress. These variables are: dissatisfaction, insecurity, overload in the workplace and also the imbalance between professional and personal life.

The **hypothesis** presented **was demonstrated**, the Mindfulness contributed to increase the Work Engagement and to reduce the variables previously said related to the work stress. Persons who practice Mindfulness may have a better tolerance for

negative thoughts, emotions, and experiences related to work, which contributes to reducing work stress (McGregor and Kennedy, 2015).

In the study following, Wiroko and Evanytha (2019) investigate the relationship between Mindfulness and Work Engagement, but apply it to **Indonesia's Generation Y**. This is the first study that focuses on a generation of individuals.

Generation Y is more commonly defined as Millennial, which are persons born between 1981 and 1999. Generation Y is characterized by persons who are not afraid to change jobs or companies when they are no longer content. This is totally different from previous generations, where they search for stability and job security. Therefore, Wiroko and Evanytha (2019) understand that the **Work Engagement** among the Y generation will **get low levels** in the research.

The authors hypothesize that **Mindfulness correlates positively with Work Engagement among Generation Y individuals**. The conclusions drawn by the researchers after conducting the different tests is that Mindfulness correlates positively with Work Engagement. Although, in a very **weak way** among the participants who belonged to generation Y.

Therefore, they propose the possibility that there are **other mediating variables** between Mindfulness and Work Engagement. In addition, they say that a larger sample should be used for future research to show a more accurate representation.

5.2. The different connectors between Mindfulness and Work Engagement

In the following section, the different connectors found will be presented, which the authors of the different articles analyzed have affirmed to be the mediators between the relationship between Mindfulness and Work Engagement.

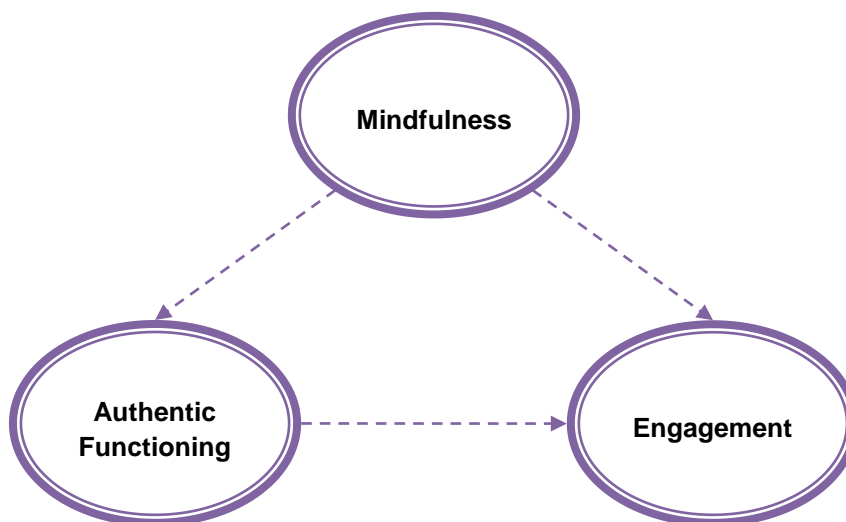
5.2.1 Authentic functioning as a connector between Mindfulness and Work Engagement

In this section, a review will be made of the article by Leroy, Anseel and Dimitrova (2013). This article is one of the most important, since it has succeeded in establishing a mediator between Mindfulness and Work Engagement that is widely accepted by the scientific community with almost 300 citations.

The objective of this article was to analyze if **Mindfulness and Work Engagement** had a **positive relationship** between them and that the **mediator** of this relationship was the **authentic functioning**. Information was collected during Mindfulness training, which was done at three different times (before, during and after the training) in order to be able to analyze the information, both in a dynamic way, during the training, and in a static way, at a specific moment.

The term authentic functioning can be defined as a way of interacting with oneself and others in an open and non-defensive manner (Leroy et al., 2015). Therefore, it was expected that by improving a person's level of Mindfulness, higher levels of authentic functioning would be generated. Figure 5 below shows the model of the relationship between constructs expected by Leroy, Anseel and Dimitrova (2013).

Illustration 5: Model proposed by Leroy between the relationship of Mindfulness, Engagement and Authentic Functioning.



Source: Leroy, Anseel and Dimitrova (2013)

As a result of this research, it is obtained that the **Mindfulness is an antecedent of the authentic functioning**. Furthermore, Mindfulness is important for improving the personal resources of the JD-R model and therefore, increasing participation in the job. And finally, that **authentic functioning is an antecedent of Work Engagement** (Leroy, Anseel and Dimitrova, 2013).

On the other hand, with regard to the information analyzed both dynamically and statically, it is extracted that **Mindfulness in a static way**, it may **increase** the level of

Work Engagement since it helps to be completely present, improving the quality of the experience (Leroy, Anseel and Dimitrova, 2013).

As for the dynamic results, the **authentic functioning** totally **mediates** the relationship between **Mindfulness** and **Work Engagement**. It helps to internalize work activities by consciously choosing to engage with them for self-determined reasons (Leroy, Anseel and Dimitrova, 2013).

5.2.2 Psychological capital (PsyCap) as a connector between Mindfulness and Work Engagement

Two other authors support the possibility that the mediator between Mindfulness and Work Engagement is psychological capital (PsyCap). But before going on to review these articles; a definition of psychological capital will be given for a better understanding of them.

The **psychological capital** or also named PsyCap is formed by different positive psychological constructs that when combined together result in PsyCap. These constructs are **hope, optimism, self-efficacy** and **resistance**, and are represented as a higher order factor formed by these four facets (Luthans et al., 2007).

The first article is by the authors Malinowski and Lim (2015). This article is one of the most popular (in terms of the topic discussed here) among the scientific community and has more than one hundred and seventy citations in its five years of publication.

The study by Malinowski and Lim (2015) analyses the relationship between Mindfulness, Work Engagement and also the general well-being of employees. The study was realized to 299 employees, with a full time job. The results obtained in the study affirm that Mindfulness is responsible for positively influencing well-being and Work Engagement. In addition, the relationships obtained previously are mediated by the positive effect related to job and psychological capital, which as previously said is formed by hope, optimism, resistance and finally self-efficacy (Luthans et al., 2007).

Therefore, Malinowski and Lim (2015) state that psychological capital or **PsyCap** is in charge of **mediating** the **relationship** between **Mindfulness** and **Work Engagement**. This connection can be seen in Figure 6 below.

Illustration 6: Psychological capital as the mediator between Mindfulness and Work Engagement.



Source: Own elaboration.

Mindfulness increases **Work Engagement**, by increasing the positive effect on hope and optimism, which, as is already well-known, improve Work Engagement, thus generating the so-called “**full mediation**” (Malinowski and Lim, 2015). Finally, the capacity of **non-reactivity** and **non-discrimination** of employees is one of the important skills that Mindfulness provides to employees in the workplace.

Kotzé (2018) published the first article, where a study is realized where, a model was proposed combining with the psychological capital (explained previously), the self-leadership, the Mindfulness and the Work Engagement. Kotzé aimed to determine if psychological capital is in charge of mediating the relationship between Mindfulness and Work Engagement (formed by vigor, absorption and dedication).

First, it was clarified that **psychological capital** had a **positive influence** on the two components (**vigor and dedication**) of Work Engagement. On the other hand, **self-leadership** and **Mindfulness** also had a **positive influence** on psychological capital (**PsyCap**), as can be seen in the previous article.

As a conclusion, it is obtained that the psychological capital is in charge of mediating between the Mindfulness with the Work Engagement as in the study of Malinowski and Lim (2015). So Mindfulness helps persons to strengthen the belief that they have what it takes to achieve success (self-efficacy). Helping to maintain hope, optimism and resilience (Bandura, 1986), showing greater Work Engagement and better results.

5.2.3. Other mediators between the Mindfulness relationship and the work engagement

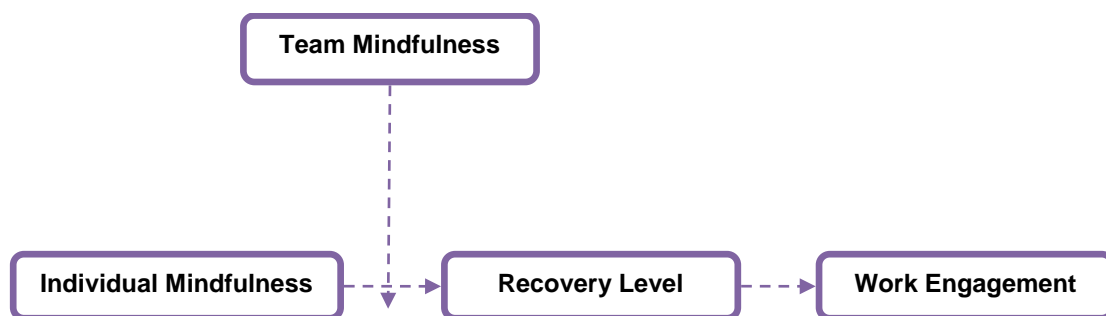
In the article by Liu et al. (2020), the authors conducted a research where they analyzed the result of implementing Mindfulness both individually and in groups, considering the **recovery level** of the employees as a moderating role between Mindfulness and Work Engagement.

Mindfulness improves individual awareness and self-regulation (Brown and Ryan, 2003), facilitating faster recovery from work-related stress. But this study also considers the level of mindfulness as a group, since equipment characteristics can influence the individual level.

The result of this research, **demonstrates** the existence of a **relationship** between individual **Mindfulness**, **recovery level** and **Work Engagement**. Furthermore, it also concludes that **Mindfulness in teams** has a moderating role that helps employees to reduce work stress. This study helps to understand a bit more, what is the connecting mechanism between Mindfulness and Work Engagement, using the recovery level as a connector.

To see more clearly, Figure 7 shows the relationships between individual Mindfulness, group Mindfulness, recovery level and Work Engagement.

Illustration 7: Relationship between group and individual Mindfulness, Work Engagement and recovery level.



Source: Liu et. al (2020)

It will now turn to the study of the first investigation of all the literature that exists in an Eastern context. In Eastern countries the practice of Mindfulness is used in companies more commonly. With this research, the authors aimed to improve a previous research

elaborated by them. The authors Petchsawang and McLean (2017) aimed to analyze the relationships between **Mindfulness, spirituality in the workplace** and **Work Engagement**. All this was compared with companies that implement Mindfulness with those that do not.

As a conclusion, it was found that in companies that give their employees the possibility of doing Mindfulness practices, they obtain a greater Work Engagement from their employees than in companies that do not have it in place or do not give the possibility of doing Mindfulness related activities.

Therefore, Petchsawang and McLean (2017) can affirm that **spirituality in the workplace** is the **mediator** between **Mindfulness** and **Work Engagement** in this study. Consequently, Work Engagement could be improved by increasing the spirituality in the workplace that is achieved through Mindfulness.

5.3. Mindfulness as a mediating variable

Until now, in the articles concerning Mindfulness and Work Engagement, the different connectors between the two constructs or which mediators could influence had been searched. But, after realizing this theoretical review, some researchers, situate Mindfulness as the connector between two different variables, as it will be seen later.

In this research Morrow and Conger (2018) introduced another variable as **Job Crafting**. Job Crafting is about employees having the freedom to be able to **transform** that part of their job with which they are not really satisfied. And achieve that the employees feel more **comfortable** and **confident** with their work.

In this research, the authors aimed to discover if Mindfulness was the mediator between Work Engagement and the job meaning, which are two types of Job Crafting. The results of the research supported that the **Mindfulness** is the responsible for **mediating** the relationship between **Work Engagement** and the **job meaning**.

Therefore, again a study describes the importance of giving employees Mindfulness training to help them focus on their daily tasks, so that they can think more clearly and make better decisions. Consequently, Mindfulness will help them make **better decisions** in transforming their jobs to find their most **meaningful jobs** and be more **productive** (Morrow and Conger, 2018).

Another of the studies realized by Bunjak and Cerne (2018) investigates if the Mindfulness is the responsible to mediate between the Work Engagement and the **strategic optimism** of the **leader-follower**. Strategic optimism is a cognitive strategy used by persons who are characterized by having control over a specific situation, with a low level of anxiety and avoiding the negative results it causes (Chang, Chang and Sanna, 2009).

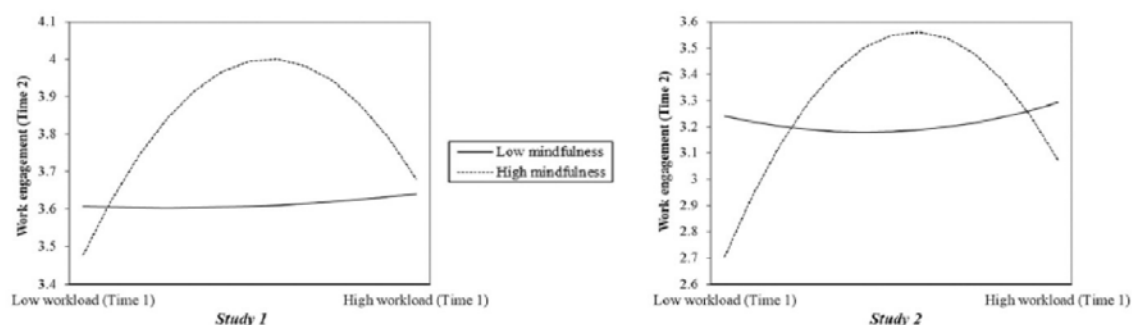
This study attempts to prove if employees feel closer to their leaders when they are more optimistic. Therefore, they propose that when a strategic cognitive association between the leader and the follower is mediated by Mindfulness, it will increase the employees' Work Engagement. Strategic optimism is a measurable element and seems to be a **critical element** for assigning followers to specific leaders (Bunjak and Cerne, 2018).

In this investigation, Bunjak and Cerne (2018) found that working with a leader who has the **same cognitive style** as their employee can make the employee **more engaged**. Consequently, followers who share the same level of strategic optimism as their leaders correlate with high levels of attention and Work Engagement. Therefore, this study helps to assign followers to leaders who have the same strategic optimism and increase Work Engagement.

In this latest reviewed research, Montani et al. (2020) report that the relationship between **workload** and **innovative work behavior** is U-shaped. And they analyze the role of Work Engagement and Mindfulness in this model.

Figure 8 below shows the inverted U-shape of the relationship between workload and the level of Work Engagement. In addition, the different levels of Mindfulness are shown, for the two studies realized by Montani and his partners.

Illustration 8: Inverted U relationship between workload and Work Engagement.



Source: Bunjak and Cerne (2018).

In consequence, it is proposed that Work Engagement is a moderator between workload and innovative behavior. In addition, that the Mindfulness is the moderator between the workload, the Work Engagement and the innovative behavior.

Therefore, it has been studied how situations with a high level of stress (**workload**) for employees may **promote work engagement** and also **increase innovative behavior**. In addition, they analyze the effects that Mindfulness has on high levels of work stress.

Three different studies were developed for this research, and all three supported the hypotheses. When employees were exposed to **intermediate levels of workload** (stress level) (no high load, no low load) they were **more engaged** in the work. Therefore, they became more engaged to innovative activities. And it should be added that the effects of moderate workload are stronger when employees had a high level of Mindfulness (rather than a low level of Mindfulness).

5.4. Workplace Mindfulness intervention programs

In the following section, two types of programs used to implement Mindfulness interventions in the workplace will be shown. These programs are: Mindfulness in Motion (MIM) and Mindful 'Vitality in Practice'(VIP).

5.4.1. Mindfulness in Motion (MIM)

Mindfulness in Motion (MIM) is a Mindfulness intervention that is **implemented** in the **workplace**. It is performed in a **shorter way**; it has been modified to avoid losing the intensity of Mindfulness - Based Stress Reduction (MBSR). This way, it can be completed in a shorter time and does not disturb the employees' usual working day.

In the investigation conducted by Klatt, Steinberg and Duchemin (2015), an intervention was made to employees in the workplace to professionals in the sanitary sector. The intervention was performed during the working day and in groups, for one hour per week, about 8 weeks. In addition, the participants were provided with CDs and a DVD for individual practice. The content and structure of the sessions followed the same as the MBSR.

The intervention was given to a group of **ICU nurses** and proved successful in **increasing** their **engagement** and **resilience**. Therefore, it is indicative that MIM is viable for application in high-stress workplaces.

This Mindfulness intervention is designed to provide busy employees with the opportunity to experience the benefits of Mindfulness. As has been seen previously in hospital ICU nurses, or could also be applied in police and firefighters, for example. This **intervention** is oriented to employees who experience **higher levels of stress** and prevent **burnout**. Therefore, the engagement of the employees can be ensured and resilience can be increased.

Modifications that may be **simply** introduced to the MIM are essential. They demonstrate to employees that the intervention addresses their specific stresses and problems, applied to their unique environmental tensions (Klatt, Steinberg and Duchemin, 2015).

In order to be successful, the intervention requires the complete **support** of the **organization's** leaders. These activities are realized during working hours. And sometimes, according to the planning of the activities, working hours may be reduced. Moreover, the economic cost of implementing these practices. In addition, it is necessary to use some location of the work place, to be able to realize the different activities.

5.4.2. Mindful 'Vitality in Practice' (VIP)

In this study, Van Berkel et al. (2014) developed an innovative form of workplace intervention called "Mindful 'Vitality in Practice' (VIP). The purpose of Van Berkel's study was to analyze the effectiveness of a Mindfulness related health promotion intervention in the workplace. And try to **improve participation** in the workplace, the **mental health** of employees and the **level of Mindfulness** of employees.

The intervention had a duration of 6 months, where the employees assisted to meditation classes, e - coaching, team building. The activities were conducted in groups and adapted to the employees' working day, without altering their usual schedule (8 sessions of an hour and a half each). On the other hand, the control group did not realize any of these activities and only obtained a link to a web page where the benefits of these activities were shown, but they weren't instructed to perform them.

The main results of this study were that **no effects were observed** in terms of engagement at work, after six and twelve months. Therefore, there were also no positive results for improving employees' mental health or improving employees' Mindfulness. The intervention was not as successful as the previously mentioned intervention (MIM).

The **reasons** for this result in the study are that it may be a consequence of the **intensity** and **duration** of the intervention in the workplace. Because the Mindfulness training they designed was not intense sufficient to cause results at six and twelve months from the start of the study. Another reason could be the so-called "**ceiling effect**", occurring when initial results are so high that they are impossible to improve.

5.5. Negative results of investigations

To conclude with this theoretical review of the relationship between Mindfulness and Work Engagement, it is also necessary to include those studies that have realized investigations to determine what relationship existed between the two constructs and the result has been unfavorable.

The negative results should not be ignored, because with them it is possible to improve in the future. For this reason, this last section is going to be focused on discussing this investigation and determining the cause of these adverse results.

In the research realized by Balundé and Paradniké (2016) the purpose of the study was to analyze if the **high performance job practices**, the **Mindfulness** of the employees and the **self-concept** (this is the opinion that a person has about himself) have a relation with the Work Engagement.

In this study they were based on the Job Demands - Resources (**JD-R**) theory already defined previously. Therefore, they intended to analyze the interaction of the three components: job resources, personal resources and Work Engagement, considering as high performance practices part of the job resources, on the other hand, Mindfulness and self-concept as personal resources.

Therefore, the hypotheses of the study were if high performance work practices, Mindfulness and clarity of self-concept are positively related to the dimensions of Work Engagement (vigor, dedication and absorption).

The results of this research determined that **high performance work practices** are only **related** to one of the dimensions of Work Engagement, **motivation**. Therefore, the authors determined that in the sample collected, what really motivates employees is **financial security**. This is because employees are more engaged when the company offers them a motivating reward that allows them to develop their careers, and this is what generates more participation at work.

Another of the results achieved is that **Mindfulness** is **not** a significant **predictor** of **Work Engagement**. One of the conclusions reached by the authors is that there may be some moderating factor between them and that the personality traits of each employee, for example, have not been taken into account.

Another reason for these results is the so-called "**automatic pilot**". Mindfulness helps to be aware of reality at every moment, and to constantly ask yourself what the meaning of the activities you are doing is. It may be that this reality is not pleasant for the employee and results in the appearance of anxiety and so they prefer to avoid it.

In the master's project realized by Bus (2016) he conducted a Mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) training to employees of two universities in the Netherlands. With this training, the aim was to clarify the **effects** of **Mindfulness** on **work-related psychological outcomes**.

Two studies were completed. In the first, it was investigated if Mindfulness can be taken as a personal resource within the Job Demands - Resources (JD-R) model. On the other hand, in the second study conducted by Bus (2016), Mindfulness-based

stress reduction (MBSR) training was introduced. To observe, if an increase in Mindfulness can make employees more prepared to manage a situation with a high stress load and simultaneously reduce burnout. Bus also studied if an increase in Mindfulness increases Work Engagement.

The conclusions extracted from this study are that **Mindfulness is not** part of **personal resources**. Only, when the level of Mindfulness in the employee is high and it complies with its role as a mediator, so only very attentive employees could benefit from maintaining self-control and using it more effectively, so they would find their work more satisfactory.

On the other hand, **Mindfulness** was also **not** identified as having a **significant** effect on **Work Engagement**. The reason given by Bus (2016) for these results is that there was **no control group** to contrast the results. It could also be that there were other personal factors in the employees that made the result of the study vary. Bus also adds that the sample chosen is quite homogeneous.

The aim of Peters (2018) research was to analyze the effect of **Mindfulness** training on employees at an Australian university on **work engagement, well-being, happiness** and **positivity**. The lessons the employees received were an adapted form of the Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) program. The results of the study did **not demonstrate** that Mindfulness influenced the variables mentioned above.

One of the reasons given by Peters (2018) is the **reduced sample** volume. For the results to be more accurate they should be tested on a larger sample of employees.

Also, that being a short-form version of the Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) program may **not** have had **sufficient impact**. Another reason may be due to the **retention rate** of participants in the program.

Finally, it is important to find the appropriate moment to implement Mindfulness training for employees. Therefore, it is important to adapt the implementation of Mindfulness programs appropriately. It can be realized during working hours but without being a setback rather than a benefit for the employee.

On this occasion the author Lehmann (2019) developed a study in which it was hypothesized that **Mindfulness mediates** the relationship between consciousness and **Work Engagement**. The participants in this study were teachers, since engaged teachers ensure a high quality of the educational system (Burić and Macuka, 2018).

It is probably one of the first researches of these characteristics that has been realized in an educational center. This study is also a pioneer in considering consciousness as a personality characteristic. Therefore, other hypotheses suggested were if persons with a high consciousness trait can experience greater Work Engagement.

The study developed by Lehmann (2019) revealed that Mindfulness did **not mediate the relationship** between consciousness and Work Engagement in this sample studied. But they do not completely exclude the benefits that Mindfulness could have for teachers, if they were given Mindfulness courses. There would also be benefits for students, as mentioned above.

The main conclusions of the result of this study, which they consider to have been the cause of the adverse outcome is because of the **cross-sectional design** of the study. This type of design only provides **information** at a **specific moment** in time, and it is not observed how it would develop in subsequent months.

Another reason may be that **teachers evaluate themselves as more engaged** than they really are, even making explicit that the questionnaire would be totally anonymous and would not be seen by their superiors.

In the research of Malik and Aslam (2019), they focus on analyzing how **Mindfulness** has **effects** on **burnout** and **Work Engagement** in companies in Pakistan. This is one of the first studies to be developed in an Eastern country. The final objective was to provide information to company managers for the possible application of Mindfulness, inside working hours.

The result of this research is that Mindfulness does not positively affect Work Engagement, but instead it does so in a **negative way**. Therefore, the idea of "**automatic pilot**" reappears, since according to Malik and Aslam (2019) a person who is more mindful will make him more aware of the situation, and his level of work stress will increase when he becomes conscious of the real situation he is experiencing. But on the other hand, the results do support their hypothesis that Mindfulness has an inverse relationship with burnout.

Finally, the research of Zavina (2019) who realized a final study where they analyzed the relationship between **Mindfulness** and **Work Engagement**, proposing that **self-control** makes as the mediator. The study was performed in the education sector, more specifically among university professors.

A relationship between Mindfulness and Work Engagement was found, but **self-control** was **not the link** between the two constructs. The more mindful the teachers were the less self-control they experienced and vice versa. This may be caused by several factors, the first of which could be that the survey was given to the teachers by their superiors, which may have altered the answers, **responding** in a **more positive** way about their work and trying to impress their superiors. Also in the study, Zavina (2019) concluded that some of the **participants felt stress** when completing the test, which may also have altered the results.

The author also explains these results by not considering the different dimensions of both Mindfulness and Work Engagement.

In the following section, the interpretation of both the adverse and positive results mentioned in previous sections will be made. And of all those mediating factors that the investigations have in common and that can give a clearer view of the results.

6. DISCUSSION

In the following section, the interpretation of the results obtained in this theoretical review will be made, emphasizing the implications (theoretical and/or professional). To begin with, the benefits obtained by the employees both in the service sector and for the rest of the employees will be emphasized. In the review realized to the studies previously mentioned, it has been demonstrated the different results obtained as a result of the imparting of the Mindfulness to the employees.

The most **promising results** obtained are: an increase in professional **well-being**, improved **retention of health professionals**, **better attention** to clients (or patients), higher levels of **happiness**, and increased **job productivity**.

And of course, **Mindfulness** has helped employees become **more engaged** to their work. All the studies analyzed had one thing in common, to improve Work Engagement through Mindfulness, in addition to having increased employee engagement; other benefits have been obtained through the practice of Mindfulness.

The professional implications obtained by improving Mindfulness mean that employees are likely to become **less vulnerable to work-related stress** situations, allowing for improved **productivity** and **morale** (McGregor and Kennedy, 2015). These benefits

will make employees more prepared for the demands that are made on them today (Table 2), increasing their ability to deal with high workload situations and time pressure.

Most importantly, these benefits are of **significant value** to **health care professionals**. These employees eventually learn to live with stress and situations that involve a lot of psychological stress. Healthcare professionals are exposed to great pressures at work on a daily level and not only their physical health must be considered, their mental health is also important and the occurrence of symptoms of burnout must be avoided as much as possible.

Throughout the theoretical review, different mediators have been discovered who could be involved in the connection between Mindfulness and Work Engagement. Several mediators have been found such as **Authentic functioning** by Leroy, Anseel and Dimitrova (2013) or the **psychological capital** of Malinowski and Lim (2015) or other connectors such as the **recovery level** and **spirituality in the workplace**. Even that Mindfulness itself acts as a connector between a construct and Work Engagement.

Therefore, in terms of theoretical implications, it seems that there is **no single mediator** between Mindfulness and Work Engagement. The different investigations analyzed have shown different mechanisms of relationship between the two constructs examined.

Throughout this theoretical review, two workplace interventions have also been discussed: Mindfulness in Motion (MIM) and Mindful 'Vitality in Practice' (VIP). The second intervention did not have positive results but on the other hand, the first intervention did demonstrate the benefits for the employees who participated in it.

This type of **intervention** is essential to bring the benefits of Mindfulness to all types of jobs and employees. Being **brief** and **relatively economical**, they are available to more employees and employers, and achieve the engagement of the employee and obtain the benefits mentioned above.

Finally, the researches, whose results did not demonstrate the positive relationship between Mindfulness and Work Engagement, were also had been mentioned. There are several factors that the different researches have in common so that they did not obtain the benefits of Mindfulness on Work Engagement.

The most common is the **existence of mediating factors** between Mindfulness and Work Engagement that have not been taken into consideration or mediating factors that were thought to mediate between the two constructs and were not.

For the implementation of these practices, the **retention of participants** is extremely important. Therefore, it is important to observe the evolution of the participants from the beginning to the end. Or even a few months after the end of the test to obtain more reliable results. This is where the **adaptation of the interventions** performed becomes extremely relevant, such as with the Mindfulness in Motion (MIM) program.

If the participants experience more stress and anxiety while completing the activities, because it is reducing their time for their job tasks, the intervention is useless. Therefore, it is important to have the opinion of the employees for the implementation of the activities.

On the other hand, the **amount of participants** in the activities is also critical. The larger the samples are taken, more reliable and meaningful the results will be.

However, this should not be considered only for negative results, it should be taken into consideration also, for investigations that have obtained positives results and so, to observe if the results are genuinely about reality or not is completely accurate.

7. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this theoretical review, as explained in the introduction, was to discover how Mindfulness helps to promote employee engagement. And also, to understand the mechanism behind this relationship, in order to have a clearer view. Throughout this theoretical review, the importance of Mindfulness has been reflected. Not only for the clinical treatment of patients, also at a business environment for employees.

After the literature review above, Mindfulness influences the Work Engagement of employees, in three different forms. The first one is the **stable attention**, as it had already been said; the Mindfulness focuses the attention to the present. This helps the employee to be conscious of the clarity of the actual experience, as a consequence of his state of receptive attention. Therefore, the employee is involved in happiness and becomes more proactive in participating in the activities (Brown, Ryan and Creswell, 2007).

On the other hand, it also **increases consciousness** of them. This helps the employee to become conscious of the emotions and feelings that the employee has at any particular moment, promoting a more autonomous motivation (Brown, Ryan and Creswell, 2007) and finally, **self-regulation**, which is connected to the previous point. Being aware of his own feelings, the employee may help to achieve a more current attention and awareness (Glomb et al., 2011). In addition, Mindfulness may also help employees to be more confident and independent (Glomb et al., 2011).

The importance of Mindfulness for health professionals should be emphasized. As recent global developments have shown, health care professionals are crucial to society. Therefore, it is necessary to preserve these professionals both physically and mentally. Through Mindfulness, not only could stress levels be reduced, the Work Engagement of health professionals could also be improved. Work Engagement for health care professionals is important because it reminds them of their vocation, what they really enjoy doing and what they were born to do.

It is important to continue researching the implementation of Mindfulness and the benefits obtained, such as Work Engagement. And not only for employees in the health sector, also for teachers or employees in the service sector who have to adapt to high levels of work stress.

7.1. Proposed practical implementation

After reviewing sufficient literature on the matter, the necessity of broader implementation of **Mindfulness in the health sector** has been observed. Only a couple of studies related to the implementation of Mindfulness aimed at improving the Work Engagement of health professionals have appeared.

But not only would these Mindfulness sessions be designed to increase Work Engagement, also to help health care professionals to better **manage the hard working days**. These working days can be harmful to their health, with guards over 24 hours, on many occasions. If to this excess of hours, if added to the work overload and the mental and physical fatigue, it results in an increase in medical error. It is true that there are activities of this type in hospitals, but they are destined for patients and not for health care professionals.

For all these reasons it would be convenient to introduce **activities in the hospital** such as **yoga** or **meditation**. In hospitals they already have rooms where the health

professionals can go to eat or sit for a while and rest, but for the realization of activities it is proposed the existence of a different and conditioned place. Therefore, it would be necessary for the **hospital to collaborate** and provide a room that would be used exclusively for these activities or that the health professionals could simply go and relax.

The choice of a day of the week to realize these activities is complicated; there are many different schedules depending on what the function of the health professional is. Emergency health professionals working up to 12-hour turns cannot be compared as those working in external consultations, which have a fixed schedule from Monday to Friday.

The most appropriate thing would be to realize these activities at the **end** of their **working week**, so that they can achieve a greater rest and achieve "disconnect" from work once at home. But it would be convenient to ask employees when they would prefer to do these activities, either on an established day of the week or when they feel high levels of work stress. For this second option, the health professionals could be provided with CDs with meditation or yoga courses and have them available when they require them.

If, on the other hand, the activities are programmed, short Mindfulness programs such as **Mindfulness in Motion (MIM)** are recommended with the realization of the activities **1 hour a week** and in a group way. This would require the hiring of a professional which would mean a major cost to the State, but it would achieve an improvement in the mental and physical well-being of health professionals.

Through these Mindfulness activities, the **vocation** of health care professionals to take care of persons would be **intact**, and the engagement with their work would be preserved. This would **prevent** these professionals from becoming **burned out** and suffering from **mental illnesses** (such as anxiety or depression) that are more difficult to treat.

In an article published in the newspaper El País on 29 March 2020. The health professionals are meditating in the corridors of the hospital, in order to overcome the hard work they are doing to combat the Covid-19. With the proposal made here, these health professionals would have a place to perform this activity and the support of an expert in the different activities of Mindfulness

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