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Using leader-relational theory to understand follower-perceived leader mindfulness and its impact on follower engagement

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USING LEADER-RELATIONAL THEORY TO UNDERSTAND FOLLOWER-PERCEIVED

LEADER MINDFULNESS AND ITS IMPACT ON FOLLOWER ENGAGEMENT

A Research Project

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LEADER MINDFULNESS AND FOLLOWER ENGAGEMENT

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Abstract

This mixed-methods study examined the connection between follower-perceived leader mindfulness and follower engagement levels through the relationship between leaders and their followers (or direct reports). 61 followers (or direct reports) self-assessed their engagement levels and their perception of their leader's mindfulness. After the primary analysis, 8 followers were interviewed using a semi-structured format. Quantitative findings indicated a significant yet moderate correlation between follower-perceived leader mindfulness and follower engagement levels. In the qualitative findings, followers reported characteristics of their leader, related to mindfulness, that helped them stay engaged. The current study demonstrates that mindfulness contributes to leaders' abilities to interact with their followers and attune with others' emotional states. Overall, results suggest that mindfulness may influence follower engagement levels, however, it is not the only contributing factor. As such, leaders who practice mindfulness may still add value by promoting quality leader-follower relationships in the workplace.

Keywords: Engagement, Mindfulness, Leadership, Well-Being, Performance

Chapter 1: Introduction

Employee wellness is a topic of interest in the workplace today where many organizations recognize that in order to keep competing talent, they must incentivize talent through offering benefits that would make it easier for employees to do their job. For example, Google subsidizes food in their dining commons, allow employees to dress casually, and provide nap pods and onsite laundry services (D'Onfro & Smith, 2014). Netflix is following suit with their declaration of unlimited vacation days and paid maternity leave for up to one year (Kokalitcheva, 2015). Although these offerings are beneficial to employees, the question remains: are these actually the primary reasons an employee would stay with their organization?

It may be that fun and convenient benefits are not the only reasons an employee stays. In fact, the "secret sauce" may go beyond wellness initiatives within the workplace. As such, engagement has emerged as an important topic in organizational science and practice. Employee engagement levels measure how employees feel about their leader, work, and the organization. The concept of engagement was initially introduced by Kahn (1990) as the way that "people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances," (p. 694). In general, engagement is "the level of commitment and involvement an employee has towards their organization and its values," (Anitha, 2014, p. 308). In recent decades, engagement has been a term used by many people across organizations, with increasing interest from business leaders as they recognize that higher engagement levels are good for business (Attridge, 2009).

When employees are engaged, studies have consistently shown that they are more productive and less likely to turnover; and the organizations are more profitable, safer, and healthier (Wollard, 2011). Herman, Olivo, and Gioia (2003) found that organizations with high

levels of engagement can have company revenues that are as much as 40% higher than those

with low levels, and that in companies with employees who also have high levels of pride in their

company, the revenue per employee is significantly higher. Gallup, a global performance

management consulting firm, estimated that disengaged employees cost U.S. companies between

$250 and $350 billion a year (Rath & Conchie, 2009). With productivity levels linked to

engagement, it is vital for leaders to create and maintain higher engagement levels within the

organization.

While there are many predictors of engagement, the leader-follower relationship is one

determinant worth examining with follower engagement. Hay (2002) captured survey data from

330 companies across 50 countries and found that a high contributing factor to employee

turnover resulted from employees that were unhappy with their boss. The relationship an

employee has with their manager plays a monumental role in determining if they will stay with

the organization and how they will perform. Therefore, it can be argued that leadership requires a

relational view in accomplishing work through others. In fact, Bennis (2007) argued that at its

core, "leadership is grounded in a relationship" (p. 3). To be aware of the social dynamics that

come into play on teams, leaders exercise relational skills in the areas of emotional intelligence,

interpersonal savviness, and self-awareness.

An emerging area of research is mindfulness at work. Mindfulness integrates these

interpersonal skills and can be a promising and powerful set of related practices for leaders to

embrace as part of their approach to increase engagement levels on their team where team

members are considered "followers". In fact, research has shown that mindfulness training is

linked to increased engagement in employees that practice it (West, Dyrbye, Rabatin, Call,

Davidson, Multari, Romanski, Hellyer, Sloan, & Shanafelt, 2014). Additionally, many major

companies are beginning to recognize how effective mindfulness can be and have integrated it into their culture, including Google, Apple, Procter & Gamble, General Mills, and Aetna (Hansen, 2012). With this recent interest in the concept of mindfulness, there is more research emerging that defines what it is and how it can benefit individuals. While mindfulness is an old concept, associated with Buddhist roots dating back over two millennia (Brown, Ryan, & Creswell, 2007), numerous definitions have been introduced in the field tied to academic, philosophical, and religious constructs. In bringing together all of these ideas, mindfulness can be defined as a state of consciousness where attention is focused nonjudgmentally on present-moment phenomena (Kabat-Zinn, 2005).

The benefits of mindfulness at the individual level are extensive and well documented (e.g. Brown et al., 2007; Dane, 2011; Good, Lyddy, Glomb, Bono, Brown, Duffy, Baer, Brewer, & Lazar, 2016; Grossman, Niemann, Schmidt, & Walach, 2004; Sethi, 2009; Siegel, 2009). Mindfulness tends to improve mental health and psychological well-being, physical health, behavioral regulation, and the quality of interpersonal relationships (Brown et al., 2007). One aspect of mindfulness is awareness, which can be linked to increased regulation and allows employees to be aware of thoughts and feelings without necessarily reacting to them (Brown & Ryan, 2003). This can help mindful employees to reduce the impact of potentially stressful situations (Reb, Narayana, & Ho, 2015).

In looking at variables that mindfulness may improve, such as increased empathy, self-awareness, and attentiveness to others and situations, mindfulness is also associated with enhancing leadership efficacy (Hannah, Woolfolk, & Lord, 2009). Further, mindful individuals tend to be psychologically well-adjusted (Brown et. al., 2007). In a study looking at impacts of supervisor mindfulness, Reb, Narayanan, and Chaturvedi (2012) also found that "supervisor

mindfulness was negatively related to employee emotional exhaustion and positively related to employee work-life balance," (p. 8). However, the impact of leader mindfulness has not been explored in relation to follower engagement. The current study attempted to examine this relationship.

Purpose of the Study

The current study examined follower perceptions of leader mindfulness and its impact on follower engagement levels. The research questions were:

1. Do leaders perceived by their followers as having high levels of mindfulness lead followers that are more engaged than leaders with those perceived with low levels of mindfulness?

2. In what ways might mindfulness help leaders to engage their followers?

A phased approach was used according to the following:

- Phase 1: Determine follower perceptions of leader mindfulness levels and follower engagement levels.

- Phase 2: Generate results and determine how best to influence follower engagement levels and whether mindfulness can help leaders to engage their followers.

Significance of the Study

While there has been research on the impact of an individual's mindfulness on his/her own behaviors (e.g. Brown & Ryan, 2003; Brown et al., 2007; Reb et al., 2012; Reb et al. 2015; Roche, Haar, & Luthans, 2014), research has been limited in examining the impact of an individual's mindfulness on other people in the workplace. The current study explored the relationship between leader mindfulness and employee engagement from the follower's

perspective across multiple industries. Specifically, the research focused on whether there was a correlation between follower-perceived leader mindfulness and factors of follower engagement, such as task performance, satisfaction with their leader, and satisfaction with their work. Findings were used to determine if follower perceived leader mindfulness could be a direct or indirect medium for influencing follower engagement levels.

Sample Population

The current study included a sample population that had representatives from 16 industries. Participation was voluntary and based on a convenient sample. To be included in data analysis, participants must have reported to the manager they were assessing for at least one year. Participants identified how long they had reported into their leader, how long they had been with their organization, how long their leader had been with the organization, and how long their leader had been supervising others. A total of 100 participants responded and 62 responses were used in this study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The current study examined follower perceptions of leader mindfulness and its impact on follower engagement levels. The research questions were:

1. Do leaders perceived by their followers as having high levels of mindfulness lead followers that are more engaged than leaders perceived with low levels of mindfulness?

2. In what ways might mindfulness help leaders to engage their followers?

The current chapter reviews the literature on engagement, mindfulness, and leadership. As each topic is addressed, definitions, research, and gaps will be explored.

Engagement

What is engagement? The term itself is still an emerging concept. While it has gained popularity within the business world in recent years, what it means and how it is measured varies in the academic and practitioner communities based on purpose and outcome, making the construct ever shifting (Shuck, 2011). Practitioners focus on approaches that provide clients with face validity and are usually proprietary and unavailable to scholars while academics focus on the psychological construct at the micro level to understand factors that affect how employee engagement develops (Shuck, 2011). Engagement is now an established term among managers and academics, yet as it advances, the construct is shrinking as it moves from an individual's multi-faceted work experience to rigid quantitative measures. In contrast, as researchers extend their focus areas on engagement, the boundaries blur between similar constructs. Additionally, opportunists recognize the link between engagement and performance and market it as the next best practice for managing people (Truss, Shantz, Soane, Alfes, & Delbridge, 2013).

The current section attempts to summarize the four approaches that continue to surface as major frameworks within the academic community, including the history, concept, and characteristics of each, as well as identify one framework that was used for this study.

*Need-Satisfying Approach***:** In 1990, social psychologist William Kahn introduced the first definition of engagement as an individual concept. He described it as "the harnessing of organization members' selves to their work roles, [where] people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances" (Kahn, 1990, p. 694). Engagement captures the level of self-expression (showing true thoughts, feelings, and identity) and self-employment (effort to the role) an individual brings into his/her work, to others, and to his/her performance (Kahn, 1990). Those that are disengaged withdraw from their roles and

defend themselves, withholding personal involvement physically, cognitively, and emotionally. Additionally, there are three psychological conditions that must be met in order to be engaged: meaningfulness (feeling of worth), safety (showing oneself without fear of adverse results), and availability (resources physically and emotionally to do the work) (Kahn, 1990).

Using Kahn's engagement framework and a sample of 283 employees in various industries, the research Shuck and colleagues (2011) conducted suggested that job fit, affective commitment, and psychological climate were notably related to employee engagement, and that engagement was significantly related to concepts of intention to turnover, and to discretionary effort. Foundational to many studies that followed, Kahn's definition of engagement is threaded throughout the following definitions and has strong positive correlations to productivity.

Satisfaction-Engagement Approach: Published in 2002, Harter and colleagues introduced one of the most widely read and cited works on employee engagement. Their study was the first of its kind to look at employee engagement-satisfaction and business unit outcomes (profit) at the business unit level. Harter and colleagues conducted a meta-analysis of 7,939 business units across multiple fields of industry held at the Gallup Organization, along with Gallup's definition of engagement for the study: "the individual's involvement and satisfaction with as well as enthusiasm for work," (Harter et al., 2002, p. 269). They used the Gallup Work Audit (GWA), a proprietary 12-item questionnaire developed from studies on work satisfaction, work motivation, manager practices, and work-group effectiveness. The results suggested that employee engagement has a positive relationship to key business outcomes, such as productivity, profitability, customer satisfaction, safety, and turnover.

That same year, Luthans and Peterson (2002) built on the work of Harter and colleagues (2002) by studying the relationship between manager self-efficacy, defined as "an individual's

belief about his or her abilities to mobilize cognitive resources and courses of action needed to successfully execute a specific task within a given context," (p. 379) the view of effective management practices, and employee engagement using the GWA and other measures they developed for their study. Results suggested a positive relationship between manager self-efficacy and employee engagement scores when managers rated employee effectiveness ($r = .33$) and when employees rated their manager's level of effectiveness ($r = .89$). Hence, companies that were most profitable allow people to do what they do best, with psychological ownership for the results of their work, and with people they like (Luthans & Peterson, 2002).

Multidimensional Approach: Saks (2006) conducted the first research to examine antecedents and consequences to employee engagement in academic literature. Up until this point, practitioner research was the only work connecting engagement drivers to engagement consequences. His work emerged from a multidimensional perspective on employee engagement. Saks (2006) suggested that there were separate states of engagement: job engagement and organizational engagement. He defined engagement as "a distinct and unique construct that consists of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral components that are associated with individual role performance," (p. 602).

This definition extended current thinking on the model and was inclusive of literature done before by Kahn (1990), Maslach and colleagues (2001), and Harter and colleagues (2002). Saks (2006) viewed engagement as being absorbed into the work one performs (Shuck, 2011). This view parallels Kahn (1990) and Harter et al. (2002) in that each framework suggests that for absorption to take place, an employee must "readily have the physical, emotional, and psychological resources to complete their work," (Shuck, 2011, p. 315). Saks's (2006) approach is still widely cited in literature and is often used as a framework for new engagement models.

Burnout-Antithesis Approach: Maslach (2001) conceptualized engagement as the inverse of burnout, distinguished by energy, involvement, and efficacy. During this time, burnout literature was primarily linked to employees in professions that were responsible for interacting with people in stressful situations, such as in customer service, and viewed as the opposite of job engagement (Shuck, 2011). Burnout is the erosion of engagement that takes place when meaningful and challenging work becomes unpleasant and meaningless (Maslach et. al, 2001).

The burnout dimensions are overwhelming exhaustion, feelings of cynicism, and a sense of ineffectiveness (Maslach et. al., 2001). Although a validated work engagement scale was created using the Maslach model, critics suggest that this approach to understanding engagement does not capture the cognitive engagement processes conceptualized by Kahn (1990) because the focus is only on the emotional and physical absences of burnout (Johnson, 2003).

Building on Maslach and colleagues (2001) work and proposing that engagement was a separate psychological state, Schaufeli and colleagues (2006) defined engagement as a fulfilling, positive work-related state of mind that is comprised of vigor, dedication, and absorption. Vigor is having high energy levels and mental resilience while working. Dedication is being strongly involved in one's work and a sense of significance, pride, inspiration, and challenge. Finally, absorption is fully concentrating and happily engrossed in one's work. Unsurprisingly, vigor and dedication are considered direct opposites of Maslach and colleagues (2001) burnout dimensions of exhaustion and cynicism (Schaufeli et al., 2006). Schaufeli and colleagues (2006) established the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale that revealed the real possibility of measuring engagement as a separate psychological construct from others, such as flow or commitment.

Application of Engagement in this Study: While all four of these frameworks have contributed and extended the definitions and findings on engagement, the current study focused

on one framework. In reviewing the research, Maslach and colleagues (2001) Burnout-Antithesis Approach is tied to research on engagement that could be experienced both emotionally and cognitively, and also manifested behaviorally (Shuck, 2011), while encompassing and testing Kahn's (1990) foundational definition of engagement as absorption of one's resources into the work they perform. Where Maslach and colleagues (2001) framework only addresses engagement by measuring its burnout opposition, Schaufeli and colleagues (2006) approach builds off of Maslach and colleagues (2001) work, while interpreting engagement in its own right. For these reasons, the current study used Schaufeli and colleagues (2006) approach to engagement, grounded in Maslach and colleagues (2001) work.

Follower Engagement and Leadership

As opposed to mainstream leadership theories that explain leadership as personal characteristics, situational attributes, or a combination of the two, leadership approaches that emphasize a leader-follower relationship provide a viable alternative for looking at organizational leadership. With empirical research over the last 25 years finding connections between leadership processes and outcomes, "the quality of the relationship that develops between a leader and a follower is predictive of outcomes at the individual, group, and organizational levels of analysis," (Gerstner & Day, 1997, p. 827). In other words, leadership is theoretically a key antecedent to many factors, including employee engagement (Xu & Thomas, 2011). Additionally, studies show that how leaders exercise leadership through various leader styles and behaviors influences employee well-being, performance, behaviors, and attitudes (e.g. see Jacobsen & House, 2001; Lowe et al., 1996; Reb et al. 2012; Shamir, 1991).

To perform well, leaders must effectively exercise a variety of leadership responsibilities, including providing feedback, direction, and support to their employees (Scandura &

Schriesheim, 1994). These responsibilities emphasize that leadership effectiveness is not solely

on the leader, but that focusing on the dyadic relationship between leader and follower is critical

in facilitating successful employee outcomes, such as job performance, job satisfaction,

supervisor satisfaction, commitment, role clarity, and turnover intentions (Gerstner & Day, 1997;

Scandura & Schriesheim, 1994).

By examining the impact that leadership processes, behaviors, and characteristics may

have on follower engagement levels, leadership can be linked to engagement. For example, in a

study done by Luthans and Peterson (2002) with 170 managers, where each manager had an

average of 16 followers, they found that manager self-efficacy was a partial mediator of the

relationship between follower engagement levels and the manager's rated effectiveness. Self-

efficacy referred to the manager's "belief about his or her own abilities to mobilize cognitive

resources and courses of action needed to successfully execute a specific task within a given

context," (Luthans & Peterson, 2002, p. 379). Thus, this study posits that leaders must help to

create an environment where followers become both cognitively and emotionally engaged, which

may not only impact desirable workplace performance, but also managerial effectiveness.

Additionally, increased manager self-efficacy was also found to enhance follower engagement

and effectiveness.

Consistent with taking a relational view between leaders and followers, the Leader-

member exchange theory, or LMX, states that "leaders form high-quality relationships with some

subordinates but not others, and that the quality of leader-subordinates relationship affects

numerous workplace outcomes," (Carasco-Saul et al., 2015, p. 41). As a result, the quality of the

relationship influences follower work attitudes and behaviors. Breevart and colleagues (2015)

conducted a study with 847 Dutch police officers to examine how the LMX process related to

follower job performance. Their study suggests that leaders could positively influence follower work engagement directly through the quality of their relationship as well as indirectly through their influence of job resources availability, such as developmental opportunities. These results emphasize the importance for leaders to have a good relationship with their followers because the relationship is positively related to follower work engagement and their assessment of job performance (Breevart et al., 2015).

In looking at the relationship between leadership and employee engagement, there have been many extensive empirical and conceptual studies that connect these two factors together as well as explored other factors that mediate engagement, such as role clarity, organizational culture, optimism, intention to leave, leader emotional intelligence, among others (Alarcons, Lyons, & Tartaglia, 2010; Tims, Bakker, & Xanthopoulou, 2011; Wefald , Reichard, and Serrano, 2011; Shuck & Herd, 2012). While there are many different approaches to leadership and work engagement, an emerging area of interest is mindfulness at work.

Mindfulness

In recent years, interest in mindfulness has exploded, with the number of mindfulness-related articles and research increasing from less than 80 in 1990 to over 4,000 scholarly articles at the time of this writing (Black, 2015). The general findings emerging from this research is that mindfulness is associated with a range of benefits including increased psychological and physical well-being (Brown et al, 2007). In academia, researchers are beginning to study the role mindfulness plays in the workplace, proposing that mindfulness can be beneficial to important workplace outcomes (Good et al., 2016). Rooted in Buddhist practice, mindfulness can be thought of as a 'universal human capacity' that focuses on developing awareness and attention in the present moment (Dhiman, 2009).

There are many mindfulness definitions all around the world, each one defining it slightly differently. As Barbezat and Bush (2013) describe it, mindfulness is "both a process (mindful practice) and an outcome (mindful awareness)", and "begins with the simple act of paying attention with care and respect," (p. 95). Mindfulness has been described and assessed as both a state-level and trait-level construct (Dane, 2011). At the state-level, Brown and Ryan (2003) discuss mindfulness as 'within-person' effects that "identify systematic fluctuations above and below each person's average level on that variable," (p. 836). State mindfulness is not a quality that some individuals have and others lack, rather, it is viewed as a state of consciousness that a person can enter in and out of (Dane, 2011). Brown and Ryan (2003) identify traits as "temporally consistent characteristics, as classically defined," (p. 836). As a trait (or between-person) effect, mindfulness can be developed through mindfulness meditation, although there are also other approaches an individual can use to reinforce it. Trait-level mindfulness "relates stable individual differences to average levels of an outcome across days," (Brown & Ryan, 2003, p. 836). Although these are two different views on the mindfulness construct, they are not mutually independent of each other. For example, research indicates that some people may be in a mindful state more often than others, suggesting that mindfulness is "fundamentally a state-level construct that can also be assessed at the trait level," (Dane, 2011, p. 999).

Numerous studies support attention and awareness as the two major aspects that make up the mindfulness construct (e.g., Brown et al., 2007; Brown &Ryan, 2003; Dane, 2011; Good, et al., 2016; Reb et al., 2015). Awareness refers to "the background 'radar' of consciousness, continually monitoring the inner and outer environment," (Brown &Ryan, 2003, p. 822). As the most immediate contact with reality, an individual can take notice of stimuli without it being the main focus of attention (Brown &Ryan, 2003; Brown et al., 2007). Attention refers to the

"process of focusing conscious awareness, providing heightened sensitivity to a limited range of experience," (Brown & Ryan, 2003, p. 822). When a stimulus is strong enough, attention is activated, emerging as an individual noticing or moving toward the object (Brown et al., 2007). Attention and awareness are often confused with one another because they are so closely interconnected. They interact with one another, but empirical research has shown that they are different specific components of consciousness (Reb et al., 2015, p. 112). For example, an individual can mindwander (a state of lacking attention) with or without awareness (Smallwood et al., 2007).

Mindfulness primarily stems from Buddhism, with meditation making up the essence of the practice (Dhiman, 2009). Within the Buddhist context, "mindfulness almost always denotes an awareness of moment-to-moment changes that are taking place in [one's] body and mind," (Dhiman, 2009, p. 58). Through meditation, mindfulness can be developed, helping individuals to be introspective and gain deeper insight into themselves (Barbezat & Bush, 2013). Meditation is the core foundation of Buddhist practice. There are two main meditation forms: (1) Samatha, the development of serenity and calm, and (2) Vipassana, the development of insight (Dhiman, 2009, p. 58). Vipassana is what is most widely used in the Eastern practice of mindfulness today, as it aims to investigate the nature of reality (Dhiman, 2009). Integrating the Eastern meditative practices of mindfulness, it was Jon Kabat-Zinn who popularized mindfulness in the scientific and academic field more than 25 years ago through the development of the Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Program, linking mindfulness to a variety of well-being outcomes (Brown & Ryan, 2003; Dane, 2011). Since then, other approaches have emerged, such as Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (Brown et al., 2007). As a pioneer in empirical research on

mindfulness, Kabat-Zinn (2005) defined mindfulness as "paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally," (p. 4).

Brown et al. (2007) found six core characteristics of mindfulness: (1) clarity of awareness, (2) nonconceptual, nondiscriminatory awareness, (3) flexibility of awareness and attention, (4) empirical stance toward reality, (5) present-oriented consciousness, and (6) stability or continuity of attention and awareness. Integrating these findings with other literature, mindfulness can be universally described as being attentive and aware (Brown et al., 2007; Brown & Ryan, 2003) in the present moment (Brown et al., 2007; Herndon, 2008), without judgment (Barbezat & Bush, 2013; Kabat-Zinn, 2005). When in a mindful state, an individual can accept and acknowledge reality without getting caught up in thoughts and emotions about it (Barbezat & Bush, 2013). Mindfulness allows individuals to "observe [their] mental states without overidentifying with them," (Barbezat & Bush, 2013, p. 96), creating acceptance and better self-understanding.

Summarizing the definitions of mindfulness from Kabat-Zinn (2005), this study identifies mindfulness as a state of consciousness where attention is focused nonjudgmentally on present-moment phenomena. Grounded in both Buddhism and academia, this view captures the prevailing aspects of mindfulness in Eastern practices.

Mindfulness Outcomes: As academics have begun recognizing mindfulness as an accessible state open to scientific examination, there has been a surge of empirical work and research on it (e.g., Brown & Ryan, 2003; Dane, 2011; Good et al., 2016; Lau et al., 2006). The findings around the benefits of mindfulness show promise, including evidence that mindfulness is associated with increasing physical and mental health, interpersonal relationship quality, and

behavioral regulation (Brown et al., 2007). Mindfulness research has shown positive individual

outcomes in a variety of ways, as summarized in Table 1 below.

INSERT TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE

All of these benefits speak to the central role of mindfulness in integrated functioning.

With the link to better self-regulation, enhanced brain functioning and structure, greater

autonomy, and enhanced relationship capacities, this shows that when individuals are more

mindful, they are "more capable of acting in ways that are more choiceful and more openly

attentive to and aware of themselves and the situations in which they find themselves," (Brown

et al., 2007, p. 227). This enables individuals to "view situations 'for what they really are'

without rumination or worry of past or future negative events," (Roche et al., 2014, p. 477),

allowing the more fundamental part of their self "that is grounded in awareness to emerge and

guide experience and behavior," (Brown et al., 2007, p. 227). Preliminary research is promising,

linking mindfulness to various elements of performance, including prosocial, ethical, and deviant

behavior, but more experimental evidence is needed (Good et al., 2016).

Mindfulness Practices: Developing mindfulness takes practice. Just like physical

exercise, "mental exercise has to be done regularly and the benefits accrue over time," (Sethi,

2009, p. 9). It can be cultivated in a number of ways, including through practicing yoga, tai chi,

qigong, centering prayer, mindful walking, mindfulness meditation, journal writing, body scans,

and mindfulness of the breath (Barbezat &Bush, 2013; Siegel, 2009). All of these forms are

found to enhance and develop mindfulness.

One of the most essential forms of mindfulness practice is through focusing of the breath (Dhiman, 2009; Siegel, 2009). An individual's breath "provides the conscious connection between [one's] body and [one's] mind," (Dhiman, 2009, p. 61). The breath is also the "interface between the internal and the external. It is at the boundary between the involuntary and the voluntary, the automatic and the effortful. Some people see breath as the domain of the ethereal and the physical," (Siegel, 2009, p. 149).

Whatever practice an individual chooses, the purpose is to stay attentively aware and focused on the present moment. With practice and routine, achieving a state of mindfulness can eventually be an established part of an individual (Brown & Ryan, 2003).

Measuring Mindfulness: In the rapidly evolving field of mindfulness, more and more instruments have been developed in an attempt to measure the construct accurately. Currently, the most widely used form of measuring mindfulness is through the use of self-report questionnaires (Baer, 2011; Bergomi et al., 2013; Sauer et al., 2013). Self-report questionnaires are popular because "they are convenient and efficient and can provide reliable and valid information if they are well constructed for the populations in which they will be used," (Baer, 2011, p. 244). However, defining mindfulness in precise terms is difficult because the meaning of mindfulness is subtle (Baer, 2011). For example, when examining the various instruments used today, it is of note that mindfulness scales differ in views of the mindfulness construct - some take the view that mindfulness is of a singular construct while others view it as a multifaceted construct (Baer et al., 2006; Bergomi et al., 2013). Although there is opportunity to continue improving the instruments used today, self-reports still serve a fundamental role in research because "many variables of interest, such as thoughts, emotions, and other mental processes, are observable primarily by the person experiencing them," (Baer, 2011, p. 244).

With mindfulness measurement being relatively new, it is impressive to see evidence suggesting that the eight questionnaires are reasonably sound. The "scores for most of them are significantly correlated with each other," (Baer, 2011, p. 250), meaning that the authors have similar notions about the general nature of mindfulness. Overall, "the research literature suggests that data from mindfulness questionnaires show patterns that are consistent with theoretical expectations," (Baer, 2011, p. 251). Some of the most commonly used instruments are captured and summarized in Appendix A from Sauer et al. (2013, p. 6-8) and Baer (2011, p. 248-250).

Leader Mindfulness and Follower Engagement in Organizations

Mindfulness may directly support engagement in both leaders and employees, facilitating "a sharpened attention to activities," (Leroy et al., 2013, p. 239). This attention strengthens the power and clarity of one's experiences so that individuals become more immersed and positively engaged in activities (Brown & Ryan, 2003). Multiple studies show evidence that suggests a link between mindfulness and engagement (Leroy, Anseel, Dimitrova, & Sels, 2013; Malinowski & Lim, 2015; Dane & Brummel, 2014).

Leroy and colleagues (2013) conducted a study on whether the mindset of mindfulness would be linked to feelings of engagement in one's daily work. Additionally, the researchers examined authentic functioning (being more open and non-defensive) and its relationship to mindfulness and engagement. They worked with a sample of 76 employees across 6 distinct organizations. In partnership with a training institute for mindfulness, they provided in-company mindfulness training and evaluated progress three times over a one year period – before the training, over the course of the training, and four months after the training (Leroy et al., 2013).

To measure mindfulness, Leroy and colleagues (2013) used Brown and Ryan's (2003) mindfulness attention and awareness scale. To measure engagement, Leroy and colleagues (2013) used Schaufeli and colleagues (2002) validated work engagement scale measuring vigor, dedication, and absorption. Results showed a positive effect on mindfulness and authentic functioning, but not on work engagement. However, they found that authentic functioning fully mediated the effects of mindfulness on work engagement. In order words, to become more engaged in work, the individual needs to internalize work-related activities, consciously choosing to engage in them for self-determined reasons. More importantly, this study showed that mindfulness could enhance engagement because the individual was more 'fully there' in the activity, increasing the quality of the experience. These findings suggest that mindfulness is not only important in reducing the negative symptoms of burnout, but can also be beneficial in strengthening the personal resources of work engagement (Leroy et al., 2013).

In another study conducted by Malinowski and Lim (2015), they examined the relationship between mindfulness, work engagement, and well-being in 299 employees by completing an online study. Mindfulness was measured using the Five-Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire, a 39-item scale that measures five components of mindfulness: observing, describing, acting with awareness, non-judging, and non-reacting (Baer et al., 2006). Work engagement was measured using the 9-item version of the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (Schaufeli et al., 2006). Malinowski and Lim also measured participants on their positive mental well-being and psychological capital.

Results showed that to a certain extent, there was indeed a positive relationship between mindfulness and the two outcome variables of work engagement and well-being, or the more mindful a participant scored, the higher their work engagement and well-being tended to be

(Malinowski & Lim, 2015). It is also interesting to note that the mindfulness facet, non-reacting, exerted direct influence on the majority of the variables in this study. Malinowski and Lim (2015) found that "the influence of mindfulness (non-judging and non-reacting) on work engagement is exclusively indirect, flowing via positive affect and directly from non-reacting to hope and from both factors on to work engagement," (p. 1259). This lack of a direct effect between mindfulness and engagement is consistent with the Leroy and colleagues (2013) study showing that a positive relationship between mindfulness and engagement is mediated by authentic functioning. Mindfulness shows "positive affect on work engagement through increasing positive affect, hope, and optimism, which on their own and in combination enhance work engagement," (Malinowski & Lim, 2015, p. 1250).

Lastly, the Dane and Brummel's study (2014) found evidence suggesting a positive relationship between mindfulness in the workplace and job performance that stayed significant even after including the influence of the three engagement dimensions on performance from the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale.

Leadership and Mindfulness: Although there are studies that have examined the intrapersonal effects of mindfulness, studies on the interpersonal effects of leader mindfulness in organizational science are nascent. In other words, organizational scholars have just begun gathering preliminary research on how an individual's mindfulness will impact other people in the workplace (Reb et al., 2012). The research done has only just begun materializing, linking mindfulness to performance and well-being (e.g., Dane, 2011; Good et al., 2016; Reb et al., 2012; Roche et al., 2014). Much of the research is clinical and focuses on the social interaction quality of mindfulness as it relates to intimate couples, revealing favorable information on the interpersonal effects of mindfulness that could be applied in an organizational context, including:

the ability to cope better with relationship stress, higher dispositional self-control, ability to

relate to others emotionally, and an increase in interpersonal relationship quality (Reb et al.,

2012; Wachs &Cordova, 2007).

Being mindful refers to 'an open state of mind' where the leader's attention and

awareness simply observes what is taking place with no worry about the future (Roche et al.,

2014). Many authors and researchers are beginning to see the need for mindfulness in the

workplace, even seeing "mindfulness at work [as] a key leadership competency," (Sethi, 2009, p.

7). For leaders who are working in stressful situations, greater mindfulness allows them to view

situations as they are, focusing on the immediate issue; not on what may come up, or has come

up previously (Roche et al., 2014). The ability to stay 'grounded' in the present also facilitates

reflective choices in situations that benefit the leader's mental health outcomes and well-being

(Roche et al., 2014). Mindful leaders "strengthen and hone the ability see the big picture,"

(Dhiman, 2009, p. 73), learning to respond instead of react in situations. Practicing mindfulness

strengthens leadership through (1) increased compassion, (2) deeper appreciation for the

struggles of others and self, (3) surrendering to the reality of the situation, (4) increased

conciliation through understanding of multiple perspectives, emotions, and ideas, (5) patience,

and (6) the ability to deal with uncertainty (Santorelli, 2011).

There are numerous positive psychological, physical, and work benefits in being a

mindful leader, which has yet to be explored in connection to follower engagement levels.

Mindfulness also sharpens a leader's awareness and creates self-awareness (Sethi, 2009). It can

be argued that self-awareness is one of the most critical leadership competencies (Boyatzis,

1982). Leaders displaying it are not only aware of their behaviors, but perhaps more importantly,

they are aware of their feelings, thoughts, and emotions, allowing them to regulate any

destructive emotions, such as anger, and make midcourse corrections in behavior (Sethi, 2009).

This creates emotional resilience, allowing them to cope with stressful situations in a healthier

way and meet the needs of their followers in a more constructive way.

Additionally, mindfulness permits leaders to open up their minds to new information and

to multiple perspectives, freeing them from being prisoners to the past (Sethi, 2009). This sense

of freedom that emerges from the ability to reflect and act with deliberate choice takes place

simply because leaders are more in control of themselves and situations when they see reality

more clearly (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005; Roche et al., 2014).

Application in the current study: With the link between mindfulness and the intrapersonal

effects on engagement, there is an opportunity in current research to explore how being mindful

may assist leadership performance to increase follower engagement. With greater attention,

leaders can increase their emotional, cognitive, and behavioral capacities, allowing them to

notice the follower in enhanced ways, such as picking up important non-verbal cues, increased

empathy and compassion for their followers, and an orientation that is more follower focused.

From the view that leadership is a relational process requiring dyadic exchanges to accomplish

work outcomes along with evidence of the positive interpersonal effects of mindfulness in a

social context, it may be valuable to extend current research in the organizational context by

examining the link between leader mindfulness in the leader-follower relationship with follower

engagement levels. See Figure 1 for a visual representation of the study focus.

INSERT FIGURE 1 ABOUT HERE

Chapter 3: Research Methods

The current study examined follower perceptions of leader mindfulness and its impact on follower engagement levels. The research questions were:

1. Do leaders perceived by their followers as having high levels of mindfulness lead followers that are more engaged than leaders with those perceived with low levels of mindfulness?

2. In what ways might mindfulness help leaders to engage their followers?

Research Design

A phased approach was used according to the following:

Phase 1: Data Collection

- Distribute the MAAS instrument to followers (or employees who report to a leader) to assess their perception of their leader's mindfulness levels. In the same questionnaire, distribute the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) to followers to self-report their own engagement levels.

- Summarize survey data and identify one area to explore further.

- Conduct interviews built on survey data.

Phase 2: Data analysis and interpretation

- Examine interview findings that deepen understanding of the issues.

- Analyze combined data from surveys and interviews to determine results and draw conclusions.

This study utilized a mixed methods design, which involves combining qualitative and quantitative research and data in a single research study (Creswell, 2014). The most common distinction between qualitative research and quantitative research is whether the researcher is focusing on words (qualitative) as data or numbers (quantitative) (Creswell, 2014). In qualitative research methods, the researcher typically collects many forms of data, such as through observations, interviews, documents, and audio and visual materials (Creswell, 2014). This allows the researcher to gather and drill down into data that s/he would not have access to through quantitative research, such as non-verbal behavior, tone of voice, or other visuals (Creswell, 2014). In quantitative research, the approach is impersonal since there is no verbal interaction with the subjects, but allows for gathering a large sample of data at the expense of depth. Because each research method has its strengths and limitations when looking at a specific type of data, using a mixed methods design leverages both methods for a more comprehensive study.

Using this approach is appropriate for three reasons. First, this will enable the use of triangulation, the use of different methods with disparate strengths and limitations to see if they all support the same reasoning (Maxwell, 2013). Second, it is useful in gaining information about different aspects of the phenomena, typically called complementarity and expansion (Maxwell, 2013). For example, interviewing a subject is a valid way of understanding someone's perspective, but observation expands the data by allowing the researcher to draw additional inferences about that perspective that would not be available when only relying on interview data. Finally, it permits greater depth than breadth of understanding or increased confirmation of the results of a single method (Maxwell, 2013). This creates a more comprehensive analysis on abstract topics like mindfulness, than using solely a quantitative or qualitative method.

Quantitative Phase: This study used survey research, where a sample population was studied to provide a quantitative description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of that population (Creswell, 2014). This method used questionnaires to assess: (1) to what degree a follower perceives his/her leader to be mindful and (2) to what degree the follower is engaged in the workplace.

While questionnaires allow researchers to quantify mindfulness, there are a few limitations to address. For example, there is concern in the fact that answers are self-reported so they may be biased, such as when "respondents misrepresent themselves, either deliberately or unconsciously," (Baer, 2011, p. 251). However, psychologists have been aware of this for decades and studied it extensively (Baer, 2011). Another limitation is that each mindfulness scale has its own advantages and disadvantages as a comprehensive assessment in the general population (Bergomi et al., 2013). Another concern is the understanding of what is mindfulness in the questionnaires (Baer, 2011; Bergomi et al., 2013). This is why researchers attempt to use ordinary language to describe common and recognizable experiences consistent with mindfulness (Baer, 2011).

For this study, the MAAS instrument was used as the measurement for quantitative purposes along with qualitative data. Of the instruments available, "the MAAS is probably the most widely used scale to date," (Sauer et al., 2013, p. 8), and "allows a concise assessment of mindfulness in populations without previous meditation experience," (Bergomi et al., 2013, p. 195). Given the simplicity of this instrument and the alignment in the definition of mindfulness used with it, this seemed to be the most fitting.

Qualitative Phase: The qualitative research in this study used narrative design, where the lives of individuals were studied through asking a series of open-ended questions designed to

reveal follower-perceived leadership characteristics and behaviors that influence their (the

followers') engagement levels and whether leader mindfulness affects them. Qualitative

interview data may be a valuable source of information to supplement the gaps in research

(Sauer et al., 2013). First, it allows for deeper investigation than quantitative data. Second, it can

be used to identify different types of mindfulness. Finally, qualitative interview data can

complement quantitative approaches since the purpose is exploratory, instead of confirmatory

(Sauer et al., 2013).

Sequencing the Data Collection: There are several types of mixed method strategies

identified, but this study utilized an explanatory sequential mixed methods design, where

quantitative data was collected and analyzed first, and then those results were used to plan the

second qualitative phase (Creswell, 2014, p. 224). The significant idea here is that qualitative

data is built directly on the results of the quantitative data, which can be "extreme or outlier

cases, significant predictors, significant results relating variables, insignificant results, or even

demographics" (Creswell, 2014, p. 224). One of the key strengths to this design is it allows more

in depth understanding of how the variables interact through the qualitative follow-up (Creswell,

2014).

The current study used an explanatory sequential mixed methods design that:

- Uses the individual's network to create a convenience sample of followers across
  multiple industries.
- Uses the MAAS self-assessment survey to measure the degree to which a follower
  perceives his or her leader is mindful based on this instrument.

- Uses the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES), a self-assessment survey to measure the degree of follower engagement based on this instrument.

- Uses one-on-one interviews with followers to understand how their leader affects their engagement levels and how their leader's use of mindfulness shows up in those engagements.

Quantitative Instruments Used: For the first phase of this study, the Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (or MAAS) instrument was adapted (Brown & Ryan, 2003). With a Cronbach's alpha of .89, the assessment has shown good psychometric properties. It contains 15 items and is suitable for subjects that are naïve to the mindfulness construct. The MAAS instrument uses a 6-point scale with 1 meaning "almost always" and 6 meaning "almost never". See Appendix B for the full original details of the self-report assessment. See Appendix C for the adjusted version of the instrument for this study where each item was revised to take the perspective of the follower assessing his or her own leader. The same rating scale was applied.

To measure the engagement levels of the followers (or direct reports of those leaders), the researcher employed the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale from Schaufeli and colleagues (2006). The assessment contains nine items measuring three aspects of engagement – vigor, absorption, and dedication. The assessment uses a 7-point scale with 1 meaning "never" and 6 meaning "every day". Cronbach's alpha for the total scale varies between .85 and .92 (Schaufeli et al., 2006). See Appendix D for the full version.

Qualitative Procedures Used: For the second phase of this study, participants were interviewed using open ended questions to build on the results of the quantitative data. The interviews took approximately thirty minutes and were done via in person and if the participant is not physically accessible, then via telephone. A sub-sample of 15 participants from the

quantitative phase were asked to participate with 8 total participating. The questions asked are

listed in Table 2 below:

INSERT TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE

Chapter 4: Results

The current study examined follower perceptions of leader mindfulness and its impact on

follower engagement levels. The research questions were:

1. Do leaders perceived by their followers as having high levels of mindfulness lead

   followers that are more engaged than leaders with those perceived with low levels of

   mindfulness?

2. In what ways might mindfulness help leaders to engage their followers?

The current chapter discusses the results of the study. First, an overview of the

demographic characteristics of the participants in the study will be shared, followed by an

analysis and description of the findings generated from the two surveys. Then, there is a

discussion on the characteristics that participants notice in their leaders that impact their

engagement at work, followed by characteristics they would like to see in their leaders. Finally,

the use of leader mindfulness is discussed.

Participant Demographics

61 followers participated, where participants represented a mix of professionals across 16

different industries including 31 females and 30 males ranging from 20 to 59 years old. At the

time of this study, 18 participants (or 30%) listed that they reported into their leader for more

than 4 years. 29 participants (48%) were on teams where the leader had more than 5 direct

reports. See Table 3 for more details on the participant demographics.

INSERT TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE

Survey Results

Of the 100 survey responses, 61 responses were considered valid. Responses were

eliminated if they were incomplete, duplicates, or if the survey was completed under five

minutes. The MAAS and UWES also used differing scales, which were normalized before

analyzing the results. The answer choices on the UWES survey consisted of seven possible

responses, on an intensity scale of 0 to 6. The MAAS survey had six possible responses, on a

scale of 1 to 6. In order to have an accurate measure of the effect perceived mindfulness may

have on employee engagement in the workplace, the MAAS scale was normalized to the UWES

scale by using an adjustment factor of 1.2 for each MAAS answer choice. After the adjustment, a

response of "6" on the MAAS survey is of equivalent intensity as a response of "6" on the

UWES survey.

A correlation was run between the Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS) and

Work and Well-Being Survey (UWES), showing a correlation $r = 0.31$. While this correlation

level is moderate, it nonetheless suggests that follower-perceived mindfulness has a weak

positive relationship with follower engagement levels. Additionally, in running the correlation

between mindfulness and each individual engagement characteristics, the data was consistent

with the correlation between mindfulness and overall engagement, suggesting that separating out

each engagement characteristic did not individually show a stronger or weaker relationship with

mindfulness. The perceived relationship between MAAS and UWES was tested by conducting a linear regression test, which yielded an R-square of 0.09. The results indicated that a positive relationship may exist between the two tested variables, but that only about 10% of the increase in follower engagement levels could be explained by an increase in follower-perceived leader mindfulness. The interpretation of the findings is that follower engagement is weakly supported by the follower's perception of leader mindfulness.

The results of the regression were further scrutinized through the analysis of p-values and standard error. A low p-value is desired, and $p < 0.05$ (or $> 95\%$ confidence level) is a generally accepted threshold that disproves the null hypothesis. In this case, the results showed a p-value of 0.015. Therefore, it is possible to confidently conclude that some positive relationship exists between the two variables, and that a valid null hypothesis is highly unlikely. However, the regression did have a relatively high standard error value of $SE = 1.06$. Due to the fact that the scale of the responses only allowed for a possible range of 7 points, a standard error of this caliber would be considered significant. Essentially, a regression equation that theoretically tries to predict the results would have a 15% margin of error. It is also important to note that there were no visible patterns in the residual plot graph such as heteroscedasticity or nonlinearity, indicating that the errors are fairly random and that the linear model is good fit for the data (Ragsdale, 2008).

Collectively, the regression test of the MAAS and UWES data can be interpreted to have a weak positive relationship between follower-perceived mindfulness and follower engagement levels, but with a high degree of variance and standard error. The data supports that a relationship exists, although there is no evidence that the relationship is predictable or strong.

There is a very low probability that the results occurred by chance, but follower-perceived mindfulness is clearly not the only factor driving follower engagement.

Of the 61 survey responses, 41 respondents perceived their manager to be highly mindful and self-rated themselves as engaged or highly engaged. See Tables 4-5 below for the categorization and distribution of responses. In order to gain more clarity on the results and explore the relationship further, interviews were conducted with select participants falling in categories where N >1 of the quantitative study.

INSERT TABLES 4 AND 5 ABOUT HERE

Interview Results

8 participants were interviewed and selected based on their survey result category. See Table 6 for more details.

INSERT TABLE 6 ABOUT HERE

Do leaders perceived by their followers as having high levels of mindfulness lead followers that are more engaged than leaders with those perceived with low levels of mindfulness? There were multiple factors that influence engagement that span across and beyond whether the leader was perceived as mindful. Regardless of the interviewees' survey results, the common themes that affected followers' engagement levels related to their perception of their personal relationship with their leader - that their manager saw them as a "whole"

person, not just as a direct report, and that their manager displayed attentive and supportive

characteristics towards them. In order for these characteristics to feel meaningful, interviewees

consistently associated leader authenticity with them, which contributed to their sense of being a

"whole" person as well as their perception of their leader as a "whole" person.

Personal connection and Being Seen as a "Whole" Person. Many interviewees described

having a personal connection as an influential factor when their relationship was at its best.

Personal connection is defined as having a relationship with another person that allows both

parties to see personal characteristics in one another beyond those that are work-related, creating

a fuller picture of who the individual is. One participant stated,

> *"I think he puts forth a very strong effort in letting me know that he cares about*
> *our relationship and he makes it known that he cares about me as a person…He's*
> *a big sports guy, I'm a big sports guy, so we have that to connect on, and he has*
> *girls, I have a girl, we have that to connect on…I've invited him to my softball*
> *teams, my basketball teams, my baby shower."*

Having a personal connection encompasses being caring and thoughtful of the other

person; all characteristics that interviewees described as leading to building trust and openness in

their relationship with their leader. Similarly, one participant shared:

> *"(Participant) was someone that was thoughtful, someone who personally cared*
> *about your personal well-being and how you were feeling about life in general*
> *and even about work, and he was someone who had a lot of great relationships*
> *with a lot of people on a personal level."*

When interviewees described having a personal connection with their manager, they also

consistently described reciprocating that behavior. One participant mentioned:

> *"I think that guy would risk his life for me and I would do the same for him…He's*
> *a great guy to go have a beer with."*

Alternately, when a sense of personal connection was missing, trust and openness were not characteristics that followers used to describe their relationship with their leader. One participant rated medium on her perception of her leader's mindfulness and average on engagement stated:

> *"[I] don't really care for him. He actually scared me. Just his demeanor and the way that he talks to people is very aggressive and matter of fact, which for some people is fine. I am super non-confrontational so for me, that approach doesn't work well so I tend to shut down…His behavior is almost aloof, like he can't be bothered…I don't think he knows what I do. I don't know if he really cares."*

Attentive. Being attentive is paying close attention to the other person. Interviewees that experienced attention from their manager interpreted the behavior as thoughtful and thus, could be argued that this overlaps with having a personal connection because being attentive can indicate that the person cares about the individual. One participant described an incident with her manager that showcased this:

> *"There were little things that showed he was thoughtful, like if he was busy when I came by and he saw me but was talking to someone else, he would come by later and say, 'hey, I know you were looking for me'. I think sometimes he would try to gauge my expressions through our conversation and would try to dig a little deeper. There was that interest and desire to feel out what I'm thinking that was thoughtful because he cared and wanted to get to the root of the issue."*

In contrast, when a manager was not perceived as attentive, it could have quite the opposite effect, causing the person on the receiving end to think the manager was disengaged from the conversation, leaving the employee discouraged, or in more extreme cases, leaving them feeling subpar. One participant recounted a story of a meeting where he was called out for not paying attention and the lessons he learned from it:

> *"[Someone is] telling me something and my mind wanders even for a little bit and all of a sudden, there's a question and I think 'Oh! Let me see if I can play it back.' It's not on purpose but that just goes to show how important it is to stay in*

the present, be present, stay engaged. That's something I've had to learn recently in terms of how to behave at meetings. You know how many people go to a meeting and it's not their turn to share so they turn to their phones or laptop? Here's the downside – people are going to think you're not engaged…It's not even participating. You are participating, but you're not engaged. I've been told that that's one of the flaws I have. Even though I'm working and trying to spend my time as efficiently as possible, if you're at a meeting, you should engage because that's why you're in the meeting."

One participant mentioned this lack of attention made him feel discouraged:

"My manager gets easily distracted by anything. If anyone walks up to talk to him, especially if his phone starts ringing, he'll run off and answer it. Text messages via personal or work, he will always respond to it, even mid-conversation he'll stop and respond. Half the time he'll listen, but then half the time, he just tunes out…I don't blame him personally for it because I know what he has to deal with but sometimes it's discouraging."

Being attentive did not only apply in conversations between the manager and individual, but also in spending quality time together. This was a wish that repeatedly came up for interviewees when asked what three wishes they would have for their manager and included interviewees that did not view their manager as highly mindful. For example, one participant shared:

"He doesn't really go out for coffee or lunch with the people that report to him. He only goes with his peers. I'm not offended because I know it's a time constraint thing, but it would be nice if he got coffee with us or did something that was more on the social level on occasion."

Being more attentive also was perceived as being engaged with the individual, as one participant mentioned:

"I feel like it would feel like we're having an actual conversation instead of a multitasking conversation; when people are half answering or half talking."

Supportive. Supportive behavior is characterized by providing a safety net for the individual in situations; that their manager will watch out for them. One participant described the

impact of this behavior from his manager as empowering when taking on work. The participant

shared:

> *"When he was my manager, he acted as more of a support role. There's many ways of management and his is definitely not the directive teacher-student type of relationship. It's definitely support and nurturing, how are you doing…It's an aspect of empowerment that's in there as well. The ability to let me explore and fail and he'll come in and say it's okay, but here's one aspect to think about."*

Another participant shared a similar sentiment working in the military alongside a highly

autonomous team. The participant stated:

> *"[My manager's] job is a lot more complicated with a lot more moving parts and he was a good commanding officer because he was able to recognize that his team was very dedicated and hardworking, and fairly smart, so he allowed us to take care of things ourselves. Instead of giving us more pressure when things got bad, he would give us support, resources…That helped, knowing your boss has your back."*

The belief and sense that their manager would help them whenever they needed it seemed

to be a prevalent theme across relationships between followers and leaders in this study. Overall,

the themes did not show that leaders perceived as having high levels of mindfulness led

followers that were more engaged than leaders perceived as having low levels of mindfulness.

The descriptions that the interviewees used to describe their current relationship with their

manager, their relationship at its best, and the three wishes they had for their manager, all

depended on their level of personal connection with the manager, and how supportive and

attentive they felt their manager was towards them. Although these behaviors can be an outcome

of practicing mindfulness, mindfulness is not the sole contributing factor to the manager's ability

to exercise those characteristics.

In what ways might mindfulness help leaders to engage their followers? Mindfulness

may help in a multitude of ways, especially in examining the interaction quality between leaders

and their followers, which in turn, may help with their engagement levels. Interviewees believed

that leader mindfulness could create openness in their relationship with their manager that would

allow for more ideas and solutions as well as align their thoughts and feelings, making it easier to

work with one another, among other benefits.

    Creates "psychological safety" and openness borne out of being non-judgmental that

allows for more ideas and solutions. If their manager could be consistently attentive, aware, and

present with them at work, most interviewees felt they would be able to come up with better

ideas and perhaps, even increase their risk taking. One participant shared:

> *"My level of trust with him probably would have increased and I would have*
> *taken more risks with my work. I wouldn't have to worry about how he'd perceive*
> *it in a sense. I would just do it…Because I perceived him as someone who*
> *couldn't take feedback, I felt like if I did something that was opposing his views,*
> *he wouldn't understand what I was doing. I think he would have heard me out,*
> *but it's just that I may have subconsciously held back."*

This stemmed from feeling like the individual was not being judged. This participant felt

she already had an idea of how her manager would respond because of her previous experience

in seeing how he received feedback, lowering her willingness to share an alternative opinion for

fear of backlash from him. This was consistent with other interviewees' stories, which all

centered around a concern over how they would be received by their manager; or sense of

psychological safety with them. In other words, worry over how their manager would judge them

in their interactions. This was surfaced in another participants story as well:

> *"I think it just opens up conversation more between you and the other person*
> *because there is less of that [worry]. I think being in the moment without*
> *judgment isn't just about judging yourself and what you're feeling, but is about*
> *not judging what other people are doing as well."*

 In both participants' stories, judgment led to a shift in how the individual responded in conversation.

Attuned communication. When individuals felt like their manager was mindful, they felt attuned with them. They could assess and honestly gauge how their manager was thinking and feeling and approach the relationship appropriately. One participant recalled:

> *"The fact that he's mindful means he's responding and talking about it. He's engaged in our conversation that I'm reporting things on. It means that he has a stake in it as well as I do."*

Feeling attuned with the other person also inspires confidence in the manager that the manager is in control. For example, another participant shared:

> *"If your boss is very mindful and has that very peaceful, collected, observant, contemplative view on things, then it reminds you that it's okay, we got this. We'll be okay."*

Feel valued. Interviewees that felt their manager was mindful also felt valued. The act of paying attention and engaging in conversation was seen not only as the individual's message was received, but that their manager cared as much about the message as they did. This created a sense of value, worth, and meaning in the individual's work. One participant shared:

> *"In general, leader or not, anyone you're having a conversation where they're present and listening to you, you're going to feel more valued than when they're not and it deems that your conversation is important."*

This sense of worth seemed to strengthen engagement as an outcome, as many interviewees mentioned how feeling valued encouraged them to see their work through and motivated them to put forth effort. Or, on the opposite end, the lack of feeling valued could diminish effort and in worst case scenarios, make them want to leave. For example, one participant recounted:

> *"If someone is being mindful when they're talking with me, it makes me feel like my work is worth something. My communication is getting through…The fact that he was mindful made me feel like I really wanted to get this done because he is actually listening to me and counting on me to get this done...On a day to day level, it also makes me want to come to work…If your leader isn't really listening to you or is being mindless, you feel like your work isn't really worth that much so why are you coming over to work. It builds a gap to the point where in extreme cases, even for me perhaps, I'd probably start looking for work somewhere else."*

Models positive behavior. Seeing mindful behavior and its effect on others inspired individuals to model the same behavior with their own teams or with others, in general. One participant put it eloquently:

> *"It would affect me because it gives me something to emulate…I can see how my leader reacts to stressors and see how he reacts to his boss so for me, it's all a learning process where I can learn from what he/she does and go from there. It gives me an idea of how I want to be treated and how I want to treat other people."*

It seems that leaders who exercise mindfulness may help engage their followers through increasing the interaction quality within the leader-employee relationship. Practicing mindfulness appears to be one way to create an open environment that allows for more creative solutions to surface because by its very nature, it is about removing judgment and accepting whatever the individual is experiencing. Conditions of psychological safety are established when judgment is no longer a concern, which in turn encourages individuals to take more risks and share more ideas. Additionally, a mindful leader is paying attention and engaged with the individual, creating a sense of attunement. The individual feels connected with the leader, making it easier to gauge how to work with them. Engaging with the individual also shows them that the manager cares, creating a sense of value and motivating the individual to put forth the effort to see their work through.

Summary

Overall, there were a few areas where the survey and interview data agreed as well as disagreed, displayed in Table 7 below.

INSERT TABLE 7 ABOUT HERE

The survey results showed that a moderate positive relationship exists between follower-perceived leader mindfulness and follower engagement levels. This aligned with the interview data where leader attentiveness was named as a characteristic that followers, who were both engaged and highly engaged, noticed in their manager when their relationship was at its best. However, the personal connection between a leader and their follower and leader supportiveness were two themes that were not linked to the survey results, although it is worth mentioning that personal connection may be associated with improved social interaction quality, an interpersonal outcome of practicing mindfulness.

Additionally, the survey results rejected the null hypothesis where $p = 0.015$, showing that there is a high likelihood that a relationship exists between follower-perceived leader mindfulness and follower engagement levels. Interview data supported this relationship with interviewees (or followers) sharing that feeling valued led to an increase in desire to exercise more effort in their work, which may help with engagement. While there was some alignment in the survey and interview data, additional factors also surfaced that could be linked to outcomes of practicing mindfulness, but not necessarily influencing engagement. These factors included: psychological safety and openness leading to more ideas and solutions emerging, attuned

communication in the leader-follower relationship, and the desire to model the positive behavior seen in a mindful leader.

Chapter 5: Discussion

The leader-follower relationship directly impacts levels of follower engagement, which in turn, leads to how productive they can be. The current study focused on mindful leadership, which required a relational view in accomplishing work through others.

The purpose of the current study was to extend the research on leader mindfulness and the interpersonal effects on others by examining follower perceptions of leader mindfulness and its impact on follower engagement levels. The research questions were:

1. Do leaders perceived by their followers as having high levels of mindfulness lead followers that are more engaged than leaders with those perceived with low levels of mindfulness?

2. In what ways might mindfulness help leaders to engage their followers?

The current chapter offers a discussion of the results. Conclusions will be presented first followed by limitations to this study, and then recommendations to leaders and their organizations.

Findings

Overall, the regression test of the MAAS and UWES data showed a moderate positive relationship between follower-perceived mindfulness and follower engagement, but with a high degree of variance and standard error. A relationship exists. There is no evidence, however, that the relationship is predictable or strong. There is a very low probability that the results occurred

by chance, but follower-perceived mindfulness is not the only factor driving follower engagement.

The belief and sense that the follower's manager would help them whenever they needed it was a prevalent theme in the leader-follower relationship in this study as underscored by the interviews. The themes did not show that leaders perceived as having high levels of mindfulness led followers that were more engaged than leaders perceived as having low levels of mindfulness. The descriptions that the interviewees used to describe their current relationship with their manager, their relationship at its best, and the three wishes they had for their manager, all depended on their level of personal connection with the manager, and how supportive and attentive they felt their manager was towards them. For example, some of the descriptors used by employees included: my manager "cares about me as a person", that they "personally care about my well being", and that there is "interest and desire to feel out what I'm thinking". Although these behaviors can be an outcome of practicing mindfulness, mindfulness is one of many contributing factors to the manager's ability to exercise those characteristics.

It also seems that leaders who exercise mindfulness may help engage their followers through increasing the interaction quality within the leader-employee relationship. Practicing mindfulness helps to create an open environment that allows for more creative solutions to surface because by its very nature, it is about removing judgment and accepting whatever the individual is experiencing. Conditions of psychological safety are established when judgment is no longer a concern, which in turn encourages individuals to take more risks and share more ideas. Additionally, a mindful leader is paying attention and engaged with the individual, creating a sense of attunement. The individual feels connected with the leader, making it easier to gauge how to work with them. Engaging with the individual also shows them that the manager

cares, creating a sense of value and motivating the individual to put forth higher discretionary effort in their work.

Conclusions

This section offers interpretations of the data in this study and connects the findings to major themes found in literature. Conclusions were formed and implications of these findings are connected back to the literature.

1. Follower-perceived leader mindfulness is related to follower engagement levels.

With a moderate correlation between the Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS) and Work and Well-Being Survey (UWES) showing r = 0.31, the data suggests that follower-perceived mindfulness has a weak positive relationship with follower engagement levels. The study findings also showed that about 10% of the increase in follower engagement levels could be explained by an increase in follower-perceived leader mindfulness, where $R^2 = 0.0956$. The interpretation of the findings is that follower engagement is weakly supported by the follower's perception of leader mindfulness.

2. Other factors also surfaced that likely influence follower engagement levels, which can be developed through or independently of mindfulness.

While many of the characteristics participants used to describe their manager's leadership style as it related to helping them stay engaged at work relate to mindfulness characteristics, such as being attentive and non-judgmental, other characteristics also surfaced that could be linked to outcomes of practicing mindfulness. These characteristics included leader-follower personal connection, the leader being supportive in the follower's work, and leader-follower attuned communication.

As the literature stands, research is promising, but limited on the study of the interpersonal effects of mindfulness on others in the workplace (Reb et al., 2012). However, the few studies that are available show a positive link between leader mindfulness and employee performance and employee well-being (e.g., see Reb et al., 2012; Roche et al., 2014). Results from the current study surface a potential relationship between leader mindfulness and follower well-being mediating the effects of follower engagement. Interviewees stated that having a personal connection with their manager was an important factor during times when their relationship was at its best, allowing them to do better work. This aligns nicely with current research, showing that practicing mindfulness promotes attunement, connection, and closeness in relationships (Brown et al., 2007). Additionally, authors of mindfulness argue that the positive outcomes for employees include higher performance and greater well-being, a sentiment that was shared by the interviewees who perceived their leader to be mindful in this study (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005; Carroll, 2007).

Likewise, in the Luthans and Peterson (2002) study that examined the relationship between manager self-efficacy and employee engagement, they found a positive relationship between the two variables when managers rated employee effectiveness ($r = .33$) and when employees rated their manager's level of effectiveness ($r = .89$). In this study, followers voiced higher confidence, or higher manager self-efficacy, in their leader's ability to lead the team when they felt attuned communication existed between them. It may be interesting to examine how mindfulness may mediate the perception of leader self-efficacy given that practicing mindfulness may produce characteristic outcomes that look similar to characteristics that are linked to the perception of self-efficacy, such as the ability to self-regulate.

3. Followers that feel valued by their leaders may put forth more discretionary effort, a factor linked to engagement.

In the Shuck and colleagues (2011) study on engagement, they found that engagement was significantly related to concepts of intention to turnover and to discretionary effort. In this study, one significant theme that materialized from the interviews was about feeling valued. Interviewees mentioned that feeling valued encouraged them to see work through to completion, as well as motivated them to put forth more effort (discretionary effort). In contrast, workers that did not feel valued said they wanted to leave, reinforcing past research that engagement may be linked to discretionary effort. Knowing this, it seems that leader mindfulness may play a minor role in helping followers feel valued, which in turns increases motivation or the desire to increase discretionary effort. As mentioned above, however, there are other factors that also influence this, some of which may not have materialized in the interviews.

4. Leaders with strong listening skills, which has been related to mindfulness, may also increase their social interaction quality with followers.

There are numerous positive psychological, physical, and work benefits in being a mindful leader. For example, when leaders learn to focus, they also become better listeners since they are now able to focus their attention fully and understand what other individuals have to say rather than just listening to respond (Sethi, 2009). This research was also supported in this study, as many interviewees who viewed their leader-follower relationship positively, also described their leader similarly. Leaders that improve their listening skills may also increase their social interaction quality, as mindfulness develops empathy, or the ability to relate to others emotionally, and higher dispositional self-control (Dane, 2011; Reb et al., 2012; Wachs & Cordova, 2007).

5. Leader mindfulness may cultivate a space of openness and psychological safety for followers.

Additionally, when interviewees saw a leader was more mindful, it created a non-judgmental atmosphere of more openness and psychological safety, which could allow for more ideas and solutions to emerge. Interviewees also reported this encouraged them to take more chances in work, because their attention would shift from concern, about how their leader might respond, to how they could innovate and do better work. This theme is more closely related to employee well-being than engagement, but it would be interesting to see how engagement might be affected by well-being if it is impacted over an extensive amount of time.

It seems that leader mindfulness mainly impacts follower well-being and contributes to follower engagement, although it is not the only driving factor. Nevertheless, these findings suggest that leaders should find their own personal practices to increase self-awareness and emotional awareness, so as to learn how they are impacting others around them toward greater effectiveness. Mindfulness appears to be one helpful practice for leaders to increase follower engagement, though other practices and factors should be considered as well.

Limitations

Three limitations affected this study and should be recognized in order to have a well-rounded perspective on the work done. First, while this study utilized a mixed methods design that leveraged both quantitative and qualitative methods for a more comprehensive study, the sample size only consisted of 62 valid responses and 8 interviews, which could be considered relatively small. The sample was also a convenience sample created from the researcher's

network. To address this problem, a larger sample size should be used with a more randomized

selection approach that covers a wider range of leaders from various industries and experience.

Second, self-report bias is a potential limitation from the followers that participated in

this study. It is possible that their interpretations of their leader's mindfulness and their own

engagement level were incorrect in some way or inaccurate. For example, they may have

distorted views about their own and their manager's experiences in being mindful. Having the

follower take the MAAS survey relies on them to assess as accurately as they can their

perception of their leader's mindfulness levels. One possible way to counter this problem is to

have multiple sources of data. In this case, it might be useful in the future to have leaders

complete the MAAS survey themselves so it is not based on the follower's perception, but on the

leader's own perception of their mindfulness.

Lastly, this study only focused on two variables: follower-perceived leader mindfulness

and follower engagement. A limitation in focusing only on these two areas is that this study did

not take into account other additional variables that might influence engagement, such as: the

state of the leader-follower relationship going into the study, the leader's position (e.g. front line

manager, executive, etc.), years of leadership experience, the role that gender may play in

leadership, and perhaps, even personal factors that were not shared explicitly. In this study,

leader mindfulness may not be the only attribute that contributed to a leader's ability to

personally connect with others and be emotionally attuned. Their ability to do so might have

been caused by another factor related to the leader's state of well-being. This is an especially

challenging issue because this study deals with the human factor, where behavior can be affected

by many influences. In a future study, research could be extended to include and address these

factors in a questionnaire or during the interview.

Recommendations

Based on the present research, two recommendations can be offered. First, the study findings emphasized that a solid personal connection in the leader-follower relationship was a significant factor in impacting how the follower felt about their work. In the organizational context, it seems there is a link between relationships, work environments, and engagement. As such, the first recommendation of this study is for leaders to:

1. Find a way to integrate a lens of humanity about their team and not just treat them as workers, but as people; people that have experiences, worries, aspirations, and needs beyond what can be seen with the naked eye. This is where the importance of team building comes into play. Creating space for people to connect and harvest stronger relationships with one another also helps to facilitate the growth of trust, one of many factors that impact discretionary effort, linked to engagement. Another simple, yet impactful first step leaders can take is to schedule and conduct "check in" rounds with their direct reports. The act of touching base to see how their team is doing is one way of showing that they care, and are interested in what their team is working on. Lastly, to help bring out a leader's awareness about their own leadership style and impact on others, organizations can offer leadership training programs to build abilities in the areas of self-regulation under stress, empathy, and attunement with their teams.

2. Another way to improve the relationship quality between leaders and their team that seems promising, is based on past research, as well as findings in this study, is to include mindfulness practices into the suite of tools that leaders use to develop a sense of calm presence and collectedness in the face of day to day work with their teams. The leadership training recommended here could be achieved through a series of modules to help leaders gain clarity and awareness on their behaviors and values that impact their teams over time. The training could

include workshops, e-learning, coaching labs, and reading that leverages best practice

approaches to learning such as through the use of micro-learning methods, to immerse leaders in

learning, experiencing, and practicing the concepts that would allow them to bring their best

leadership selves in the workplace.

According to the findings in this study, a good portion of participants felt that if their

managers were more mindful, it would encourage them to demonstrate the same behavior by

being more considerate in how they act around others. The second recommendation is to

examine employee workplace well-being programs and educate employees about techniques that

help to maintain their sense of well-being. For example, it may be valuable to design

mindfulness training and similar to the recommendation for leaders, this could be a series of

modules that help employees increase their awareness on their behaviors and values that impact

those around them, including their own managers. Indeed, given that the majority of work is

done through people and the importance of dialogue and conversation to push work forward,

cultivating mindfulness is one technique that could help create a more positive environment in

business.

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Figure 1. Leader Mindfulness and Engagement

Table 1: The Benefits of Mindfulness

Benefits	Source
Physical	
- Physical health - Relief from chronic pain - Improved body regulation - Enhanced immune system - Enhanced brain function and structure - Reduced cognitive disturbances - Reduced blood pressure - Lower heart and respiratory rate	Brown et al., 2007; Dane, 2011; Grossman, et al., 2004; Reb et al., 2012; Reb et al., 2015; Sethi, 2009; Siegel, 2009
Psychological	
- Happiness - Well-being - Decreased negative affect - Stress reduction - Decreased rumination (absorption of the past or future) - Increased affective regulation - Relationship satisfaction - Clarity of emotional states - Increased mood repair - Decreased anxiety - Decreased psychological distress - Increased positive affect - Life satisfaction - Increased awareness - Increased self-control - Creativity - Optimism - Decreased depression - Vitality	Brown and Ryan, 2003; Brown et al., 2007; Reb et al., 2012; Reb et al., 2015; Roche et al., 2014
Organizational	
- Employee work engagement - Motivation - Focus - Task performance - Job satisfaction - Psychological need satisfaction - Organizational citizenship behaviors - Emotional intelligence - Decreased emotional exhaustion	Brown et al., 2007; Dane, 2011; Good et al., 2016; Hulsheger et al., 2013; Narayanan et al., 2011; Reb et al., 2012; Roche et al., 2014;

Table 2: Interview Questions

Research Questions	Interview Questions
Do leaders perceived by their followers as having high levels of mindfulness lead followers that are more engaged than leaders with those perceived with low levels of mindfulness?	In the survey you took a few months ago, I compared your work engagement level with your perception of your manager's approach to daily life. In analyzing the results, I found that a positive relationship exists, meaning that the more participants viewed their manager's approach to daily life in a positive way, the more they were engaged. For this interview, I'd like to explore this finding a bit deeper. I'd like to ask you a few questions about your relationship with your manager, mainly to get a better understanding about how this trend between your relationship with your manager and your work engagement level play out. - Describe your relationship with your manager. (Probing question: How would you describe the way they behave towards you?) - Tell me about a time in your relationship with your manager when it was at its best. What did that look like? - If you had (3) wishes for your manager, what would that be?
In what ways might mindfulness help leaders to engage their followers?	Now, I'd like to introduce the concept of mindfulness into our conversation. Are you familiar with mindfulness? - For this study, mindfulness is considered: - A state of consciousness where attention is focused nonjudgmentally on present-moment phenomena, occurring both internally and externally - In other words, mindfulness is being attentive and aware in the present moment without judgment - A person that is mindful is characterized by openness, awareness, acceptance, and curiosity - Research has explored how mindfulness helps individuals that practice it in the workplace, but how it impacts other people has yet to be explored - A mindful leader has higher emotional resilience and can self-regulate their own behavior to focus in stressful situations, respond and act deliberately in the present moment, and fully understand what others should say. When you took the survey, the set of questions focused on your manager's approach to daily life measures how mindful you perceive your manager to be.

	Let's shift to some specific questions on this topic. • If your manager could be consistently attentive and aware in the present moment with you at work, how might that help you be more engaged at work? o In what other ways might having a mindful leader help you?
Final Questions	• Is there anything else I haven't asked that you think would be useful for this study?

Table 3*: Participant Demographics

Personal Follower Demographics (N=61)	
Age	**Gender**
20-29 Years: 9	Female: 31
30-39 Years: 37	Male: 30
40-49 Years: 7	
50-59 Years: 7	
Company Demographics	
Industries Represented	**Company Size**
Entertainment	1-99 Employees: 6
Business Services	100-999 Employees: 5
Education	1,000-9,999 Employees: 28
Electric Utilities	10,000-49,999 Employees: 8
Finance	50,000+ Employees: 14
Government	
Health Care	
Lodging	
Manufacturing	
Media	
Nonprofit	
Professional Services	
Real Estate	
Restaurants, Bars, and Food	
Retail	
Transportation	
Follower and Leader Demographics	
Length of Reporting Relationship to Leader	**Number of Direct Reports of Leader**
1-2 Years: 24	1 Direct Reports: 6
2-3 Years: 11	2 Direct Reports: 2
3-4 Years: 8	3 Direct Reports: 9
4+ Years: 18	4 Direct Reports: 6
	5+ Direct Reports: 9
Length of Employment at Company	
1-2 Years: 9	
2-3 Years: 14	
3-4 Years: 5	
4+ Years: 33	

Table 4: Scoring Categories for UWES and MAAS

Category	MAAS	UWES
Low	0.00-1.99	1.78 – 2.88
Average / Medium	2.00-3.99	2.89-4.66
High	4.00-6.00	4.67-6.00

Table 5: Survey Response Distribution

Mindfulness Category	Engagement Category	N = Number of Responses
High	High	29
High	Medium	12
Medium	High	10
Medium	Medium	6
Medium	Low	1
Low	High	1
Low	Medium	1
Low	Low	1

Table 6: Interviewees by Survey Category

Mindfulness Category	Engagement Category	N = Number of respondents interviewed
High	High	2
High	Medium	2
Medium	High	2
Medium	Medium	1
Low	Medium	1

Table 7: Quantitative and Qualitative Data Comparison

| Research Question | Data Aligned | | Data Misaligned |
	Survey Results	Interview Themes	
Do leaders perceived by their followers as having high levels of mindfulness lead followers that are more engaged than leaders with those perceived with low levels of mindfulness?	Connection between follower-perceived leader mindfulness and follower engagement: • $r = 0.31$ • Weak positive relationship between the two variables	Leadership characteristics linked to mindfulness: • Leader attentiveness	Leadership characteristics indirectly linked to mindfulness: • Personal Connection between Leader and Follower • Leader Supportiveness
In what ways might mindfulness help leaders to engage their followers?	• $p = 0.015$ • Null hypothesis refuted; a relationship exists between the two variables	If leader is more mindful: • Followers feel valued, thus exercise more effort in their work	• Psychological safety and openness from being non-judgmental allows for more ideas and solutions to emerge • Attuned Communication • Models positive behavior

Figure 1: Leader Mindfulness and Follower Engagement.

Leader Mindfulness → Follower Engagement

Correlates:
Work Engagement
Self-Regulation
Self-Awareness
Performance
Well-Being
Interpersonal Relation Quality
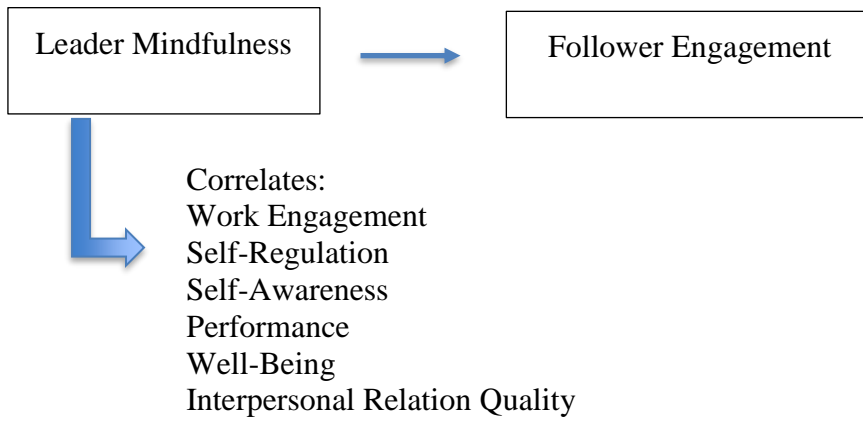
Appendix A: Mindfulness Instruments

Instrument	Measures	Adequate for mindfulness naïve or trained persons?	Trait/state
Freiburg Mindfulness Inventory (FMI)	Non-judgmental present-moment observation, openness to negative experience	Both	Trait
Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS)	Attention to and awareness of present-moment experience	Both	Trait
Kentucky Inventory of Mindfulness Skills (KIMS)	Present-moment observation, describing, acting with awareness, accepting present-moment experiences without judgment	Both	Trait
Cognitive and Affective Mindfulness Scale – Revised (CAMS-R)	Attention, awareness, present-focus, acceptance, non-judgment of thoughts and feelings	Both	Trait
Southampton Mindfulness Questionnaire (SMQ)	Mindful observation, letting go, non-aversion, non-judgment	Both	Trait
Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ)	Observing, describing, acting with awareness, non-judging of inner experience, non-reactivity to inner experience	Both	Trait
Philadelphia Mindfulness Scale (PHLMS)	Awareness, acceptance	Naïve	Trait
Toronto Mindfulness Scale (TMS)	Mindfulness during a particular mindfulness exercise	Both	State

Appendix B: Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS)

Instructions: Below is a collection of statements about your everyday experience. Using the 1-6 scale below, please indicate how frequently or infrequently you currently have each experience. Please answer according to what *really reflects* your experience rather than what you think your experience should be. Please treat each item separately from every other item.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Almost Always	Very Frequently	Somewhat Frequently	Somewhat Infrequently	Very Infrequently	Almost Never

I could be experiencing some emotion and not be conscious of it until some time later.	1	2	3	4	5	6
I break or spill things because of carelessness, not paying attention, or thinking of something else.	1	2	3	4	5	6
I find it difficult to stay focused on what's happening in the present.	1	2	3	4	5	6
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
I tend not to notice feelings of physical tension or discomfort until they really grab my attention.	1	2	3	4	5	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
It seems I am "running on automatic," without much awareness of what I'm doing.	1	2	3	4	5	6
I rush through activities without being really attentive to them.	1	2	3	4	5	6
I get so focused on the goal I want to achieve that I lose touch with what I'm doing right now to get there.	1	2	3	4	5	6
I do jobs or tasks automatically, without being aware of what I'm doing.	1	2	3	4	5	6

I find myself listening to someone with one ear, doing something else at the same time.	1	2	3	4	5	6
I drive places on 'automatic pilot' and then wonder why I went there.	1	2	3	4	5	6
I find myself preoccupied with the future or the past.	1	2	3	4	5	6
I find myself doing things without paying attention.	1	2	3	4	5	6
I snack without being aware that I'm eating.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Appendix C: Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale - Adjusted

Instructions: Below is a collection of statements about your perception of your manager's everyday experience. Using the 1-6 scale below, please indicate how frequently or infrequently you currently have each experience with your manager. Please answer according to what *really reflects* your experience with them rather than what you think your experience with them should be. Please treat each item separately from every other item.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Almost Always	Very Frequently	Somewhat Frequently	Somewhat Infrequently	Very Infrequently	Almost Never

My manager could be experiencing some emotion and not be conscious of it until some time later.	1	2	3	4	5	6
My manager breaks or spills things because of carelessness, not paying attention, or thinking of something else.	1	2	3	4	5	6
My manager finds it difficult to stay focused on what's happening in the present.	1	2	3	4	5	6
My manager tends to walk quickly to get where s/he is going without paying attention to what s/he experiences along the way.	1	2	3	4	5	6
My manager tends not to notice feelings of physical tension or discomfort until they really grab his/her attention.	1	2	3	4	5	6
My manager forgets a person's name almost as soon as s/he has been told it for the first time.	1	2	3	4	5	6
It seems my manager is "running on automatic," without much awareness of what s/he is doing.	1	2	3	4	5	6
My manager rushes through activities without being really attentive to them.	1	2	3	4	5	6

My manager gets so focused on the goal s/he wants to achieve that s/he loses touch with what s/he is doing right now to get there.	1	2	3	4	5	6
My manager does jobs or tasks automatically, without being aware of what s/he is doing.	1	2	3	4	5	6
My manager listens to me with one ear, doing something else at the same time.	1	2	3	4	5	6
My manager drives places on 'automatic pilot' and then wonders why s/he went there.	1	2	3	4	5	6
My manager seems preoccupied with the future or the past.	1	2	3	4	5	6
My manager seems to doing things without paying attention.	1	2	3	4	5	6
My manager snacks without being aware that they're eating.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Appendix D: Work and Well-Being Survey (UWES) ©

The following 9 statements are about how you feel at work. Please read each statement carefully and decide if you ever feel this way about your job. If you have never had this feeling, cross the "0" (zero) in the space after the statement. If you have had this feeling, indicate how often you feel it by crossing the number (from 1 to 6) that best describes how frequently you feel that way.

	Almost never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very often	Always
0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Never	A few times a year or less	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day

1. _____ At my work, I feel bursting with energy (what

2. _____ At my job, I feel strong and vigorous

3. _____ I am enthusiastic about my job

4. _____ My job inspires me

5. _____ When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work

6. _____ I feel happy when I am working intensely

7. _____ I am proud of the work that I do

8. _____ I am immersed in my work

9. _____ I get carried away when I'm working

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