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A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS ON THE EFFECTS OF MINDFULNESS
MEDITATION IN THE WORKPLACE

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A Qualitative Analysis on the Effects of Mindfulness Meditation in the Workplace

Bilinçli Farkındalık Meditasyonunun Çalışma Ortamındaki Etkileri Üzerine Nitel Bir
Araştırma

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To My Grandparents

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ABSTRACT

The present study aims to understand the ways in which white-collar employees make sense of practicing mindfulness meditation, with a particular focus on their work experiences. Potential effects of mindfulness meditation on participants' job satisfaction, occupational stress, consumption patterns of white collar as well as on their general job performance and relationships with colleagues at work were explored. In-depth interviews were conducted with 12 white-collar professionals and these interviews were analyzed using inductive thematic analysis. Three main themes were identified in the data: healing/well-being, subjective experiences and self-transformation in the workplace. The emergence of these themes suggested that cognitive enhancements, emotional regulations, increased self-compassion and gratitude had key roles in improving participants' well-being and performance in the workplace. Results also pointed out that job satisfaction decreases as long as participants continue on meditating, and occupational stress does not disappear. However, participants develop active and better coping skills to deal with occupational stress. Additionally conformity to corporate culture is found to be strong in this research; some of the participants stated that they cannot change their consumption patterns even though they want to due to perceived pressure to conform to white collar consumption standards. These findings are discussed in relation to previous literature. Contributions and limitations of the study are also presented.

Keywords: Mindfulness, White Collar, Occupational Stress, Job Satisfaction, Meditation, and Awareness

ÖZET

Bu araştırmanın amacı meditasyon pratiği yapan katılımcıların meditasyonu özellikle kurumsal hayatlarında nasıl anlamlandırdıklarını incelemektir. Bilinçli farkındalık meditasyonunun, katılımcıların iş tatmini, iş stresi ve beyaz yakalıların tüketim alışkanlıklarının yanı sıra genel iş performansı ve iş arkadaşları ile olan ilişkileri üzerindeki olası etkilerini araştırılmıştır. 12 beyaz yakalı katılımcı ile derinlemesine görüşme yapılmış olup, verilerin analizi için tematik analiz kullanılmıştır. Üç genel tema tanımlanmıştır; bunlar, iyileşme/iyi oluş, kişisel deneyimler ve işyerinde öz değişimdir. Bu temalar doğrultusunda bilişsel gelişim, duygu düzenleme, gelişen şefkat ve şükranın katılımcıların iyi oluş ve işyerindeki davranışlarını belirlemede önemli rolleri olduğu öngörülmüştür. Sonuçlar, katılımcıların meditasyon yaptıkça iş tatminlerinin düştüğünü, iş stresinin yok olmadığını ama katılımcıların iş stresi ile baş etme mekanizmalarını geliştirdiğini göstermektedir. Ek olarak, bu çalışmada bazı katılımcıların tüketim alışkanlıklarını değiştirmek istemelerine rağmen kurumsal kültürdeki grup normlarına uyma baskın çıktığı için değiştiremedikleri sonucuna varılmıştır. Sonuçlar mevcut literatür ile ilişkili olarak değerlendirilmiş; çalışmanın katkıları ve sınırlılıkları sunulmuştur.

Anahtar sözcük: Bilinçli Farkındalık, Beyaz Yaka, İş Stresi, İş Tatmini, Meditasyon ve Farkındalık

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The concept of mindfulness has been a popular topic for the last decade and data gathered from various psychological study demonstrate that mindfulness is associated with emotional regulation (Chambers, Gullone, & Allen, 2009), enhanced cognitive capacities (Jha, Stanley, Kiyonaga, Wong, & Gelfand, 2010), well-being (Brown & Ryan, 2003), decreased anxiety (Shapiro, Brown, & Biegel, 2007) and decreased psychological distress (Shonin, Van Gordon, Slade, & Griffiths, 2013). Most of these researches are conducted in clinical psychology field; studies in industrial-organizational (I/O) psychology with respect to mindfulness and its outcome in work settings are still limited. The present study tries to explore the effects of mindfulness meditation on white collar's work experience with a particular focus on work-related stress and job satisfaction.

Occupational stress and job satisfaction are seemingly important issues in work setting (Bono & Judge, 2003). In order to understand if mindfulness has any positive effect for employees who regularly practice mindfulness, their subjective accounts on their well-being including emotional regulation, cognitive capabilities, physical health as well as their coping with work-related stressors and job satisfaction were explored.

Results from the current thematic study of white collars' experiences of meditation are expected to shed light on employees' behavioral changes in work environment, their attitudes towards and coping with stress as well as any perceived change in job satisfaction and meaning making in their life. Accounts garnered in this study reflect on participants' reason to start meditating, frequency of meditation practice, cognitive, emotional and physiological effects of meditation, and change in interpersonal relations, coping mechanisms and meanings attributed to work.

In the following parts of this introduction, a theoretical overview of mindfulness, a brief summary of mindfulness-based interventions in psychology,

and associations between mindfulness, stress and job satisfaction will be presented.

1.1. Literature Review

“There are these two young fish swimming along, and they happen to meet an older fish swimming the other way, who nods at them and says, "Morning, boys, how's the water?" And the two young fish swim on for a bit, and then eventually one of them looks over at the other and goes, "What the hell is water?"” (Wallace, 2013) This is an anecdote from David Foster Wallace’s famous commencement speech at Kenyon College in 2005. That precious moment in which the old fish asked about the water is the mindful moment. It is related with living in the present, which is also an ancient anonymous piece of advice exists in every culture from Buddhism to Stoicism; from Ancient Greek to Modern Psychology (Goto-Jones, 2017).

The interest in mindfulness has grown exponentially in the last decennium. Even a journal is published called Mindfulness. Benefits of mindfulness are reclaimed also in popular press, yoga, health and sports magazines and TV shows. The biggest transnational enterprises ranging from Google to General Mills, as well as U.K parliament adopted mindfulness training and development programs for their people in order to benefit from its positive effects on individuals and collectives (The Mindfulness Initiative, 2016).

Mindfulness has various definitions according to different eastern and western sources but the common point is the present time awareness. The word ‘Mindfulness’ is a translation of the Pali term Sati that means awareness in Sanskrit. ‘Sati’ is the term in Satipatthana Sutta (The Discourse on the Foundations of Mindfulness) in which Siddharta who would be named as Buddha shares the initial guidelines to practice mindfulness, asks of the practitioner to focus on four different aspects: the body, feelings, consciousness and mental contents. It is called Four Foundations of Mindfulness. These four aspects are being taught in consecutive order. In this context, the practice of mindfulness aims to save the mind from greed, hatred, and delusion. They are also taught secularly

as MBIs (Mindfulness-Based Interventions) in which there is no necessity to believe in Buddhism nor have a deep knowledge about its philosophy in order to practice mindfulness (Wright, Day, & Howells, 2009). In MBIs, practitioners constantly invite their attention to bodily sensations that emerge with events, emotions or thoughts (Kabat-Zinn, *Mindfulness-based interventions in context: past, present, and future*, 2003).

Thich Nhat Hahn who is a well-known Buddhist monastic interprets mindfulness as “keeping one’s consciousness alive to the present reality” (Hahn, 1976). Zhang & Wu (2014) describe mindfulness as “a mental state with the characteristics of present-focused awareness and attention.” Thus, mindfulness has been defined as “a receptive state of mind wherein attention, informed by awareness of present experience, simply observes what is taking place” (Niemic, et al., 2010). According to the pioneer of Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) intervention program, Jon Kabat-Zinn (2003), mindfulness is an awareness that appears through attending purposefully and non-judgmentally in the present moment. Common across these definitions, mindfulness is a distinct phase of awareness whereabouts an individual focuses attention on present-moment experiences (Langer & Moldoveanu, 2000).

There are state mindfulness, trait mindfulness, mindfulness interventions, and mindfulness practices (Jamieson & Tuckey, 2017). In state mindfulness an individual is currently conscious of and attentive to stimuli arising in the present (Brown & Ryan, 2003); trait mindfulness is the continuation, frequency, and depth with which one favors to attach to states of mindfulness (Hülshager, Alberts, Feinholdt, & Lang, 2013); the participants can develop their state of awareness by practicing the method of Mindfulness-based on Interventions (Hülshager, Alberts, Feinholdt, & Lang, 2013).

Mindfulness is known as enhancing attentional stability and control, which ultimately influences their human functioning. These functioning can be grouped into four categories that are cognition, emotion, behavior, and physiology. Mindfulness with attentional stability improves control and self-awareness, emotion and psychological strength (Good, et al., 2015).

Researches also showed that mindfulness facilitates self-regulation (Glomb, Duffy, Bono, & Yang, 2011; Hülshager & Schewe, 2011). Practitioners may develop their self-regulation capabilities with a regular practice and self-regulation gives individuals better control over their action and diminishes their dependency on automatic mental processes (Glomb, Duffy, Bono, & Yang, 2011). Automaticity is defined as an engagement with an action without conscious reflections but according to perceived benefits of prior conditioning and habits (Glomb, Duffy, Bono, & Yang, 2011). Increased awareness helps people to regulate their behavior consciously.

There are many researches that examined the association between mindfulness and cognitive capacities and cognitive flexibility with different sample groups including students, professionals, soldiers, suggest that mindfulness enhances working memory capacity (Roeser, et al., 2013). Studies also indicate that there are positive effects of mindfulness on cognitive flexibility, an ability to perceive multiple perspectives or thoughts (Bishop, Lau, Shapiro, & Anderson, 2004). Individuals who practice mindfulness regularly are found to be more open to new solutions when they stuck on a (Good & Lyddy, 2015).

Mindfulness also positively affects emotional regulation, particularly one's reactivity to emotional stimulants. Mindfulness practitioners have indicated less negative affect after a stressful event according to a research conducted by Arch and Craske (2010).

Decreased reactivity to emotional stimuli can be defined as a change in emotional evaluation cultivated by mindfulness. People tend to acknowledge their experiences and stimuli in their given environment either as a positive or a negative event. (Frijda, 1988). Mindfulness meditation allows people to have a neutral understanding. Their moments are lived with less reference to past experiences and a resistance against attaching a meaning to certain outcomes. This supports individuals not to be affected by biased thinking behaviors. Especially in the workplace where employees frequently encounter different events, mindfulness might ease adaptive evaluation of irritating situations and lead people to have more neutral appraisal judgments towards any events (Hülshager,

Alberts, Feinholdt, & Lang, 2013).

Mindfulness also seems to be related to one's general emotional state and to the attentional presence that may provoke mind to navigate between the past and the future and may lead to regret about the past events and anxiety about the future plans. According to a meta-analysis of Eberth and Sedlemeier (2012), mindfulness is correlated with more positive emotional tone, which regulates both emotional and attentional states.

Beside the influence of mindfulness on cognitive enhancements, emotional regulations and self-regulation of behavior, mindfulness also affects some of the physical symptoms of human body. One of the most significant discoveries associated with Mindfulness and physiology is the impact it can have on stress response and can also be linked to various neurobiological activities related to reduced stress reactions (Creswell & Lindsay, 2014). Mindfulness meditation has positive physiological outcomes including better sleep quality (Blake, et al., 2016), increased body sensations (Van de Veer, Van Herpen, & Van Trijp, 2016) and reduced need to comfort eat (Daubenmier, et al., 2011).

Mindfulness is also related to brain functioning neuroplasticity literature e.g. physical variance of the white matter. According to Hölzel et al. (2011) mindfulness is positively correlated with shrinking of the amygdala.

Widely, mindfulness practice was used in a neurobiological research done by Luders and Cherbuin (2016) and the outcomes propose that meditation could protect brain preservation in terms of the gray and white matter by slowing down the age-related reduction of brain tissue.

1.1.1. Mindfulness-Based Interventions

Mindfulness can be practiced as form of meditation between daily routines e.g. work, study, and transportation. The essence is to use the breath as an anchor of present moment in order to cultivate awareness and stay in the moment. Mindfulness practice also requires an intentional effort. Practitioners should be curious rather than doing their practices as a duty. The most important part of the mindfulness practice is not to experience comfort rather it is concerned mainly

with observing the senses and thoughts - sensory and cognitive-affective processes - without getting caught up ruminations (Eberth & Sedlmeier, 2012). Mostly, people think that only the Buddhist priests are able to reach to wisdom but ordinary people could also reach to a level of sagesness. Practitioners usually have a bias and they may think that they are unable to meditate since their mind wanders or they got simply bored to stand still for a duration they have never experienced before. The guidance comes into prominence because the practitioners need to be reminded being non-judgmental about their thoughts and cultivate compassion for their selves to understand the wisdom they have been developing. This process is very demanding for the practitioners since the mind often goes off. Mindful walking, mindful eating, mindful brushing are also considered as mindful moment. Another key element of mindfulness is body scan in which the individuals first focus on the breath and then on each section of the body. During this session, participants methodically imagine each body part, discover their sentiment and deliberately relax those body parts. Participants also perform sitting meditation, focus in the present moment and try to think only about their existence (Hahn, 1976).

Various Buddhist meditations have been redesigned into different secularized intervention formats. These interventions draw considerable interest mostly in clinical and occupational context. They have been developed for the benefit of individuals or organizations in order to cultivate the ability of being mindful. Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (Kabat-Zinn, Mindfulness-based interventions in context: past, present, and future, 2003), Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (Segal, Williams, & Teasdale, 2002), Dialectical Behavior Therapy (Linehan, 1993) and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (Hayes, Luoma, Bond, Masuda, & Lillis, 2006) are the most researched mindfulness-based intervention programs.

John Kabat-Zinn in University of Massachusetts Medical Centre designed MBSR intervention program for the first time in 1979 for clients experiencing chronic pain (Kabat-Zinn, 2005). This program consists of an 8-week intense program in which participants meet once per week for 2-3 hours in a small group. Participants are given daily exercises of meditation, inquiry exercises

for increasing their observation e.g. mindful moment and body scan. They are also instructed to incorporate meditation into their daily lives so that routine activities become a meditative practice (Kabat-Zinn, Mindfulness-based interventions in context: past, present, and future, 2003). At the end of program they are invited to a full 6-hour retreat day in total silence. Doing home practices regularly is also as important as attending at courses. This program also calls the participants to apply 7 Attitudinal Foundations of Mindfulness practice, which includes beginner's mind, non-striving, letting go, non-judging, patience, trust and acceptance (Kabat-Zinn, 2005). These foundational attributes were identified in Jon Kabat Zinn's (2005) book, 'Full Catastrophy of Living' in order to cultivate mindfulness. John Kabat Zinn defines the key elements as following; Non-judging; Witnessing individual experiences in a detached stance and noticing the thoughts on the stream and not trying to stop it but just being aware of it. Patience; letting things unfold in their own time, being totally in the present time and accepting it with wholeness. Beginner's mind; cultivating an approach that is willing to see everything as if for the first time, being open to new opportunities, being aware of the unlikeness of every moment. Trust; developing a basic trust in oneself and the feelings. Non-striving; focusing on carefully seeing and accepting things as they are, moment by moment. Acceptance; seeing things as they actually are in present. Letting go; letting things to be, accepting things as they are (Kabat-Zinn, 2005)

People who participate in MBSR programs report fewer mood disturbances, and increased ability to regulate affect (Shonin, Van Gordon, Slade, & Griffiths, 2013). Brown et al. (2007) showed that mindfulness linked to positive emotional experiences. Trait mindfulness is related to decreased negative affect, less depressive symptoms, as well as with psychological inclinations that promote emotional regulation such as greater awareness, acceptance, and understanding of one's emotions. Similarly, MBIs have appeared to decrease individuals' rumination, rage, perceived stress, and physiological symptoms, while improving the positive outlook, empathy, sense of cohesion, self-compassion (Keng, Smoski, & Robins, 2011). According to Borgoon, Berger, and Waldron (2000), mindfulness fosters efficient communication with others because it allows an open, skillful, and proactive approach to the others.

Mindfulness-based cognitive therapy is developed by Segal, Williams and Teasdale (2002) for the treatment of depressed individuals with high rates of relapse. This program aims to provide practitioner with skills to help to avoid from recurrent depressive episodes. MBCT is given in-group format and consists of cognitive behavior therapy and mindfulness training. It is an 8-week course consists of weekly training sessions and 1 hour of daily home practice. Acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT) aims to increase psychological flexibility, conceptualized as present moment awareness and altering of behavior when necessary to align with one's values. It is a treatment model drawing on cognitive behavior therapy and mindfulness with a specific focus on acceptance, cognition, delusion, being present, self as context, values and committed action. DBT is another mindfulness-based intervention program, which treat people who have borderline personality disorder (Linehan, 1993). People are encouraged to accept their past lives and give an effort to improve their quality of life. This MBI aims to address maladaptive behaviors through validation and problem solving. Concentrative meditation helps to calm maladaptive emotional states and their related thought processes (Shonin, Van Gordon, & Griffiths, 2014). Utilizing the tranquility cultivated during concentrative meditation as a platform, insight meditation techniques are a means of undermining the determinants of such negative affective states (Rabjam, 2002).

1.1.2. Mindfulness in the Workplace

1.1.2.1. Positive Effects of Mindfulness in the Workplace

Despite the interest in mindfulness across several fields of study, organizational researchers have paid less attention to individual-level mindfulness and its consequences in the workplace (Dane & Brummel, 2013). In this chapter, the empirical researches executed in different sectors such as military, service industry, healthcare industry are briefly summarized and discussed.

A research focused on the service workers and managers in the American restaurant industry conducted by Dane and Brummel (2013). The study suggested that trait mindfulness is positively correlated with job performance. Additionally, another empirical study, which takes the nuclear power plant operators in scope,

suggests that trait mindfulness has a positive influence on task and safety performance for high-complexity-task holders (Zhang, Ding, Li, & Wu, 2013).

Mindfulness can boost the performance in the workplace due to its potential impact on cognitive capability and cognitive flexibility. With the help of heightened cognitive capabilities, the employee will be less affected by the distractions. According to Jha and colleagues (2015), military personnel who had mindfulness training had better attentional permanence comparing to the control group.

In the current workplace environments, it might be difficult to concentrate because tasks are getting complex and demanding and the work settings are distractive. As mindfulness supports self-regulation (Glomb, Duffy, Bono, & Yang, 2011), it invites individuals to the present time rather than thinking about the prior stimuli and decreases the rate of job errors.

Some of the essential domains of the organizational environment are based on interpersonal or group relations such as coordination, communication, social networks etc. Individual's relationship with supervisors or colleagues has undeniable effects on an individual's mental state (Pinck & Sonnentag, 2018). Dispositional mindfulness has undeniable effects on interpersonal attitudes and workgroup dynamics. According to a research conducted by Reb and colleagues (2014), leaders who had mindfulness practice have improved relations with their subordinates. The authors suggest that trait mindfulness is beneficial for the relationship between leaders and subordinates in terms of employee's well-being, job satisfaction, and job performance. Moreover, mindfulness seems to help workers to be less prone to respond negatively to their colleagues as a result of increased self-regulation. Mindfulness is also positively correlated with improved communication (Dekeyser, Leijssen, Leysen, & Dewulf, 2008), decreased interpersonal conflicts (Good, et al., 2015) at work.

Well-being is a major dimension of mindfulness researches. A growing literature shows that well-being is associated with mindfulness with regard to employees and organizations. Research has also shown that mindfulness trainings decrease work-related stress (Roeser, et al., 2013). Furthermore, according to a

field experiment by Hülshager and colleagues (2013), mindfulness mediates with decreased emotional exhaustion and increased job satisfaction.

1.1.2.2. Occupational Stress

Stress is defined as an adaptive response to a situation that results in physical, psychological, and/or behavioral deviations for participants (Luthans, 2005). The events that bring on stress, called stressors. They can be both positive and negative and caused by external or internal events within organizations or from employees themselves (Luthans, 2005). Role ambiguity, conflict, job insecurity, work-family conflict, environmental uncertainty can be counted as organizational stress factors. Personal characteristics, personal control, learned helplessness and psychological hardiness are seen as individual stressors (National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, 1987). There are also extra-organizational stressors including changes in the society, technological developments, economic conditions, globalization, race, gender and family. According to Lepine, Podsakoff and Lepine's (2005) meta-analysis, the hindrance stressors (distress) in the work environment e.g. organizational politics, role ambiguity, and office bureaucracy have a negative effect on worker's motivation. Conversely challenge stressors (eustress) e.g. high workload, time pressure, high responsibility have a positive effect on workers'.

Managing stress in the workplace is a serious issue. Each year, significant numbers of workers (526.000) in the UK suffer from work-related stress (WRS), depression or anxiety. A total of 12.5 million working days are lost due to WRS in 2016/2017. This is equivalent to an average of 23.8 days per case. The main reason behind WRS, depression, and anxiety include strict deadlines, heavy workload and lack of administrative support (Health and Safety Executive, 2017).

Forty percent of workers in the US declare that their professions are "very or extremely stressful" and 26% of laborer stated they are "often or very often stressed at work" (NIOSH, 1999). Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health has declared in 2007 that the employees who are suffering from mental health problems cost their employer approximately £26 billion each year. This means

£1,035 for every employee in the UK workforce (Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health, 2007). In Stress Report Deutschland 2012 for Germany, the total cost of mental health problems to employers is roughly 6 billion euros (Lohmann-Heischl, 2012). Thus it can be suggested that occupational stress has deleterious effects both on an individual scale and on organization scale. These costs come in the form of increased health care costs and absences and diminished productivity and performance.

Physical health and psychological health of individuals may be affected deleteriously by chronic stress such as immune system problems, cardiovascular system problems, musculoskeletal system problems and gastrointestinal system problems (DeFrank & Ivancevich, 1998). High levels of stress may be followed by anger, anxiety, depression, nervousness, aggression, complaints, irritability, sleep disorders, eating (Adams & et al., 2003).

Mindfulness is also an efficient means of alleviating stress. Paying attention, which can be enhanced by mindfulness practice, plays an important role in dealing with stressors. Mindful employees are more likely to be aware of their emotional reactions against stressors and balance them accordingly (Glomb, Duffy, Bono, & Yang, 2011).

Moreover, by means of mindfulness, individuals gain a non-evaluative and non-judgmental awareness; it means that individuals are less prone to evaluate the events with automatic thought patterns and habits. The prevention from habitual response patterns as an outcome of mindfulness assures flexibility in reacting upon workplace stressors (Glomb, Duffy, Bono, & Yang, 2011). Brown et al. (2007) suggest that mindfulness prompts individuals to be emotionally less reactive against unpleasant events and be more tolerant to them.

Mindfulness involves solid stand, by doing so; mindful employees are less likely to get caught on thoughts and emotions; in turn, they act less ego-driven to events occurring in their work environment. It is also mentioned in Brown et al.'s (2007) research that mindfulness is also associated with less egocentric behaviors in stressful situations.

Occupational stress occurs when employees lose their optimal working

conditions e.g. ending up with strict working hours, unplanned deadlines, contradictory demands etc. (Van Gordon, Shonin, Zangeneh, & Griffiths, 2014). From the Buddhist perspective, these external events causing to occupational stress can be solved by internal changes according to Tshit Nath Hhan (1976), which corresponds to the concept of a personal resource. The personal resource can be characterized as self-esteem, optimization and proactive personality, which are also essential for the resilience of employees against challenges (Hülshager, Alberts, Feinholdt, & Lang, 2013).

1.1.2.3. Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is stated by Locke as “A pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job or job experience.” (Locke, 1969) Job satisfaction is an evaluative judgment of a person’s work situation (Weiss, Ilgen, & Sharbaugh, 1982). Job satisfaction is a well studied and an important issue in the organizational behavior field.

Academic literature consists of three theories on job satisfaction, namely situational theories, dispositional approaches and interactive theories. Situational theories assume that job satisfaction originates from the nature of one's job. Dispositional approaches support that job satisfaction based on the individual’s psychology. Interactive theories, on the other hand, suppose that job satisfaction originate from the interaction of situational and psychological factors (Judge & Klinger, 2008).

Factors influencing job satisfaction can be mainly examined under two categories, which are organizational factors, and individual factors. Organizational factors include job characteristics, compensation systems, supervision, promotion, working conditions, and relations between colleagues. Age, personality, education, and tenure are seen as individual job satisfaction factors (Luthans, 2005). In job satisfaction literature, salary seems to be the most explicit employee satisfaction factor. The amount of pay, pay distribution, pay security are important for an employee’s job satisfaction. Supervision is another key factor in job satisfaction. Employees who seek and receive help in tasks seem to be more satisfied with their job. Employees also prefer self-development and find

promotions less valuable since the hierarchical structure in the workforce places them beneath others that mean employees do not get to climb to the top (Luthans, 2005).

Interpersonal relations among colleagues have also a positive effect on employees' satisfaction. If the in-group relations are good, employees tend to get motivated but if the relations are bad, employees lose their satisfaction. Employees expect their colleagues to be supportive and agreeable (Van der Vegt, Emans, & Vliert, 2001). Work conditions are another dimension of employees' job satisfaction. If the work conditions are healthy, employees will not be dissatisfied but if they are bad, employees will be negatively affected (Herzberg, *The Motivation-Hygiene Concept and Problems of Manpower*, 1964).

Critical consequences of job satisfaction in organizations and for individuals makes it a more popular subject in I/O psychology field. To specify, job satisfaction is a significant correlate of employee psychological well-being, organizational commitment, motivation, integrity, job performance, job burnout, absenteeism, turnover intentions (Luthans, 2005).

1.1.2.3.1. Theories of Job Satisfaction

Abraham Maslow's needs hierarchy theory states that human behavior is determined by the driving forces and (Maslow, 1943) there is a hierarchical order of needs. Individuals are motivated to pass through to fulfill another higher order need once a need is satisfied. According to this theory, any job has to offer the chance of promotion, development in order to give the opportunity to satisfy higher needs of an employee (Maslow, 1943). Alderfer applied Maslow hierarchy theory to organizations in terms of identifying employers' needs. Existence, relatedness and growth are the main dimensions of the theory (Alderfer, 1969). Herzberg two factors theory suggests that there are certain factors in the workplace, which cause job satisfaction and dissatisfaction. According to Herzberg, satisfaction and dissatisfaction act independently. Theory reveals also the factors as growth, achievement, recognition, and responsibility cause satisfaction but their absence does not induce any dissatisfaction. On the other hand, hygiene factors are as salary, status, security, work conditions that cause dissatisfaction but their presence does not induce satisfaction (Herzberg, 1959).

Vroom's expectation theory assumes that people make conscious choices among many options in order to maximize their pleasure. And these decisions are made by individual factors such as personality, skills, knowledge, and abilities. Vroom focuses on issues of expectancy, instrumentality, and valence (Vroom, 1967). Porter and Lawler's theory is based on Vroom's expectancy theory. According to this theory, an employer's motivation is affected by the reward for completing a task. This model suggests that an employer's perception is highly affected by the fairness of the reward (Lawler & Porter, 1967).

J. Stacy Adams (1963) develops equity theory and it focuses on determining whether the distribution of resources is fair to both relational partners. According to this theory, employees seek to maintain equity between the inputs that they bring to a job and the outcomes that they receive from it against the perceived inputs and outcomes of others (Vinchur & Kopper, 2011). In an organizational context, outcomes may refer to salary, career opportunities, extra-legal benefits, and even to psychological rewards such as feedback and support from colleagues or a supervisor (De Gieter, De Cooman, Pepermans, & Jegers, 2012)

Locke (1976) argued that individuals' values would determine what satisfied them on the job. Only the unfulfilled job values that were important to the individual would be dissatisfying. Thus, value-percept theory predicts that discrepancies between what is desired and what is received are dissatisfying only if the job facet is important to the individual. Because individuals consider multiple facets when evaluating their job satisfaction, the cognitive calculus is repeated for each job facet (Judge & Klinger, 2008).

1.1.2.3.2. The relation between Job Satisfaction and Mindfulness

Events may occur in every situation such as in work setting and have a direct affection on behaviors and attitudes (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). People respond for the most of the time emotionally to the events and perceive them either as negative or positive which might cause perceived stress. Mindfulness meditation promotes adaptive stress appraisal (Weinstein et al., 2009). Especially during working, people encounter challenging situations, which may lead to negative thought patterns. Nevertheless, when mindfulness practitioners can stay

in the present time without being non-judgmental, they can control assigning a meaning to them which in return, direct people to have a more positive evaluation of the circumstances (Hülshager, Alberts, Feinholdt, & Lang, 2013).

Mindfulness also promotes self-determined behavior, which is useful against automatic functioning (Glomb, Duffy, Bono, & Yang, 2011) and helps people to get in contact with their core values and needs (Shapiro, Carlson, Astin, & Freedman, 2006).

According to emotional labor theory, employees act in two acting styles when they face to a challenge, first one is surface acting and the second one is deep acting (Grandley, 2000; Martinez-Ínigo, Totterdell, & Holman, 2008). Surface acting decreases mental capacities and undermines employee's sense of authenticity and negatively influences social interactions with customers (Brotheridge & Lee, 2002; Côté, 2005).

According to Diefendorff, Richard & Yang (2008) who conducted a research combining emotional regulation skills and affective events at work admit that surface acting is used, particularly with hard clients (Grandey, Dichter, & Sin, 2004).

Mindfulness separates the self from internal/external events (Glomb, Duffy, Bono, & Yang, 2011). Employees are deattached from emotional reactions and when they confront to insult from their superiors or clients, they realize that there is nothing to do with their true self. Their perspective broadens and they get to know that thoughts do not reflect the reality and they eventually pass by (Chambers, Gullone, & Allen, 2009).

1.2. Aim of the Present Research

The current study will focus on whether mindfulness presents an effect on job satisfaction, occupational stress, and consumption patterns as well as on subjective well-being in the work settings for white collar employees. The possible findings address to I/O literature on theoretical perspectives and practical utilization. The study may help to understand potential benefits of mindfulness

meditation for employees in the short and long term, and provides insights into ways in which employees deal with occupational stress, workload and related cognitive difficulties, and negative interpersonal relationship. The study also allows for a deeper analysis of job satisfaction and its relationship with mindfulness. Finally, findings may also support organizations to understand and relate to employees' performance, well being, and turnover.

This study seeks to answer the following research questions:

(a) How do white-collar employees who have practiced meditation make meaning of it in general?

(b) How do they make meaning of meditation in relation to their work experiences, including occupational stress, job satisfaction and corporate working/living norms?

CHAPTER 2

METHOD

2.1. Participants/Sample

The study's sample consisted of 12 adult participants (6 females and 6 males) who have been working in in small, large or big companies in various industries, including finance sector, energy sector, aviation industry, telecommunication industry and etc. The duration of their work experience ranged between 3,5 to 25 years with a mean duration of 12,6 years. Participants are between ages 26-46 (mean 35,9) and nine of the participants were single and three of them were married. At the time of the study, ten participants have been living in Istanbul and two of them were living abroad due to their duties. All participants are Turkish citizens. All participants have been practicing mindfulness meditation but they did not have the same hours of experience during meditation.

It is a purposeful sampling that aims to reach a closely defined group for whom the research questions will be significant (Smith & Osborn, 2003). Therefore, the recruitment was based on certain criteria. First, they had to be between the ages 21-65 and employed full time in a company at that the time of his/her interview. Second, they were required to employ a regular mindfulness practice for more than 6 months. Regular mindfulness practice was defined as having practice 3 times per week and at least 10 minutes each time. The 6 months practice criterion for participation was put to ensure that participants had enough experience in order to have enough experience in and reflections on mindfulness. Participants were recruited through the researcher's personal contacts from meditation and yoga studios. After the initial interviews, the sample size was enlarged, mainly through snowball sampling. Most of the participants attends weekly meditation class or sangha gatherings and they had a routine practice per week.

2.2. Instruments

The overall focus of the research - How do white-collar employees who have practiced meditation make sense of it in general? How do they make meaning of meditation in relation to their work, including occupational stress, job satisfaction and corporate working/living norms? - is divided into broad areas of inquiry: subjective experiences of mindfulness practices, stress management, job satisfaction, and consumption patterns. Participants were asked to tell how had they got started practicing meditation and how did meditation effect their emotional, cognitive and physical status in the first period. In the second period they were asked whether their consumption pattern was changed. In the third period, participants were asked to define stress in work setting, how they cope with stress and whether the perceived stress was changed due to practicing meditation regularly. In the forth and the last step, they were asked whether they were satisfied with their job and whether the level of perceived job satisfaction was changed due to meditation.

2.3. Procedure

The Ethics Committee of Istanbul Bilgi University approved the study. Each participant was given information sheet before his/her interview and a written informed consent was obtained in the study (See Appendix A and Appendix B for the ethical approval, information sheet and consent form).

Data collection was conducted in the one-month period between the dates 4 November 2007 and 14 December 2017. There were 30 open-ended questions to elicit rich and specific information. Every interview was completed in one hour on the average.

A semi-structured protocol was used to guide the interviews, focusing on the participant's point of view concerning their work experiences. Smith and Osborn's (2003) guidelines were employed to prepare the interview schedule (See Appendix C). He proposes that the researcher needs to think about a broad range of issues that are expected to be covered in the interview after having determined the overall focus of the interview. Such an approach to the interview fits with the way the research questions are organized in the present study.

2.3. Data Analysis

The data was held by MAXQDA 12. Data was launch to the analysis program and the coding and defining the sub-themes and main themes were made on the same program. Thematic analysis offers two primary ways to identify data, which are inductive and deductive ways. An inductive approach offers a ‘bottom up’ way by which data are coded without fitting them into a predefined code frame whereas deductive or theoretical approach offers a ‘top down’ way by which researchers may have more detailed analysis of some aspect of the data instead of having a rich report of the data. This study adopts an inductive because it has a specific research question evolving through the coding process (Braun & Clark, 2006).

In analyzing the data the six phases of Thematic Analysis proposed by Braun & Clarke (2006) were followed for identifying, analyzing, and reporting themes within the data. Thematic analysis was used because it is relatively quick and it has the flexibility and the potential to pick out unexpected insights since we tried to conduct an explorative study in order to understand if there is an effect on the so-called themes. Moreover, thematic analysis has other advantages such as being flexible, relatively easy and quick method to conduct compared to other qualitative methods which are suitable for researches with little or no experience for conducting a qualitative research so that educated public can also access easily to the results. Additionally, thematic analysis led researchers to design the research practically by summarizing main themes of a large data set easily; suggesting ‘thick description’ of the data set; highlighting affinities and contrasts over the data set and allowing the social and psychological interpretations of data. On the other hand, flexibility provided by thematic analysis brings also some disadvantages for example researchers can get lost in the data set while they try to decide where to focus on the data set (Braun & Clark, 2006). Additionally, some of the disadvantages are related to incompetently conducted researches and irrelevant research question. Another disadvantage is the interpretation power of thematic analysis unless it is not used within a theoretical framework that holds the proposed analytic claims. Likewise, thematic analysis is not a branded analysis method like grounded theory, IPA or discourse analysis and unlike narrative and

biographical methods; thematic analysis cannot offer a sense of continuity and contradiction (Braun & Clark, 2006).

In the first phase, each interview was transcribed in full for coding and data storage and reread in order to familiarize with data and have initial ideas. In the second phase, the researcher sorted as many initial codes as possible to represent any interesting features in the entire data set. In the third phase, the researcher looked for the similarity between the codes and grouped similar codes together. In the fourth phase, themes were identified that were associated with the coded extracts and the entire data set. This generated a master codebook of different themes. In the fifth phase, each theme was defined clearly and named. In the sixth and last phase, the report for each theme was written.

CHAPTER 3

RESULTS

The interviewees described many different outcomes of their daily practice, which they believed influenced their personal life and work experiences. After the thematic analysis of full transcripts, three themes were identified: Healing/Well-being Practice, Subjective Experiences and Self Transformation on Work Setting.

The main theme of Healing/Well-being Practice consists of three sub-themes that are; commitment to practice routines, psychological well-being and spiritual well-being.

Self-Transcendence consists of five sub-themes that are; self-compassion, gratitude, cognitive enhancements, emotional regulation and body-awareness. Self-transformation on work setting also includes three five-themes; interpersonal relations, job satisfaction, occupational stress, coping skills and carrier oriented leisure time.

Table 1.

List of Main Themes

THEMES		
Healing/Well-being Practice	Subjective Experiences	Self-Transformation on Work Setting
Commitment to a Demanding practice	Self compassion	Interpersonal relations
A tool for spiritual well-Being	Gratitude	Consumption patterns
A tool for psychological well-being	Cognitive enhancements	Job satisfaction
	Emotional regulation	Occupational stress
	Body awareness	Coping skills

3.1. Healing/Well-being Practice

Healing and well-being is based on participants' perception of mindfulness meditation and the importance it has in their lives. The participants accepted mindfulness practice as a healing or well-being tool that required a regular practice routine. They suggested that they had not been aware of their emotions, thoughts or tricks of their mind before they started practicing in meditation. Mindfulness meditation seemed to help them understand themselves better. In this section, sub-themes characterizing commitment to a demanding practice, spiritual and psychological well-being will be presented.

3.1.1. Commitment to a Demanding Practice

Most of the participants described the mindfulness practice as a committed routine. They suggested that practicing it as daily ritual could attain the positive effects of mindfulness. Three interviewees reported that they carried-out mindfulness meditation for a minimum of 20 minutes during their chosen time of day (by sitting).

And, if time was limited, some practiced (at least) three minutes during their available breaks. While other participants practiced 3-4 times in a week. Others also mentioned that they encouraged themselves to sit down to meditate as a daily priority. And, they would often end their practice with a broad sense of satisfaction and joy. Metin mentioned, 'Before I do any meditation, I start with a wish and duty to meditate. That is when I usually become peaceful. Meditation brings a sense of accomplishment, calm and focus.'

On the other hand, Görkem's emphasis was as follows:

'It's like going to the gym, I have to push myself hard to go yet deep down inside I want to practice it and I love it. It's the same with meditation. I have to force myself to practice. Once I start my practice it ends with a sense of spiritual satisfaction. Then I become proud of myself.'

Görkem also mentioned that the mindfulness practice brought not only sense of calm or peace, it also made people face their irritation, anger etc. Most of the participants experienced meditation not knowing how to confront bad sensations coming from their past.

‘For me the process was slightly different. I practiced meditation militantly, 10 days for 10 hours, sometimes 11 hours. I experienced that past negative and positive experiences were coming back to me. After that I returned to meditating at home for a while. I realised that, -all the emotions and memories I’d repressed was unleashing in my mind so I stopped for a while. I’ve learnt that it’s a part of the practice and it’s normal to experience bad emotions.’

Betül also described similar experiences;

‘There was a sweet feeling when I first started practicing meditation. As I got deeper and further into my practice, I felt like I got rid of all the built up dirt. I imagined a house that had been locked up for 30 years, and finally I’ve opened the windows and cleaned out all the mess. That house is my mind. Although it was very difficult to confront certain memories I encountered while meditating, I have kept going. It’s still not finished yet because life goes on and so I need to clean up regularly, as long as I live.’

3.1.2. A Tool for Spiritual Well-being

Interviewees acknowledged meditation as a great tool for healing and self-transformation. In their stories, the main motivation for practicing meditation was to find a means of dealing with a difficult period in their lives or some psychological difficulties.

In an effort to make sense of meditation as a healing practice and to improve (or enhance) their psychological state, some participants undertook a spiritual discourse and employed a concept of the inner-self. Yet, others made

sense of their experience in a psychological discourse and opened up about their anxieties and mental breakdowns. These experiences, therefore can be categorized under two sub-themes; spiritual and psychological well being.

Four interviewees similarly stated a sense of knowing how to better lead their lives, especially in the long run and felt that they got in touch with their “inner-self”, claiming that they were confident about choices they made in their lives.

Betül summarized her thoughts below:

‘Human beings are constantly looking for something and most of them don’t even know what it is. If you were to ask someone on the street ‘what are you looking for in life?’ Ninety five percent of them would not know what to answer. Even to ask what they dream of, would still be unclear yet everybody is looking for something. That pursuit is the connection with the inner-self. That connection is lost after a human was born and have got socialised. Meditation provides the tools for you to get in touch with your inner-self.’

Onur also provided a supportive statement, ‘People are getting old and experience comes with age. There is always a situation to experience and an opportunity to know one-self better. I feel that meditation contributes to one’s journey to get to know better him or herself.’

3.1.3. A Tool for Psychological Well-being

The interviewees reported that their psychological well being had improved by practising mindfulness. Three of the participants started practicing meditation after having a mental breakdown due to life or work related struggles. Their pursuit for happiness in work and life encouraged them to start meditating. Participants stated that they reaped the benefits of regular practicing in a relatively short period of time.

Metin shared his account;

‘I was suffering from depression for a long time. It went on for 5-6 months. I felt it again after that, it was more like periodic depression. I remained in control, but I knew there was something hidden I needed to confront. Three years ago July 2015, again a very troubled period of my life, I began to look for ways I could heal. At first I heard about the concept of neuroplasticity. When I looked at the concept of plasticity, it was about rewiring the brain. After that, started reading material and research about posttraumatic stress disorder, anxiety and depression. That’s where I came across meditation methods...’

Didem has supportive comments;

‘My boyfriend at that time, had left me. I had bottomed in financial terms. I left my job. I had to work another job. I was extremely weak. I was just going through a very bad time... One day I left the house, I came to Yogasala. I had nothing in my head, I just thought I had go to class and try the lesson. There were brochures on the table, teacher training brochures, I took them, and saw Alexis who said “You can do it!”, so I joined the class even though I had absolutely no money to pay, but I managed to find the money and now another journey has begun, which is good.’

3.2. Subjective Experiences

According to the participants, they regarded the practice of meditation as a good tool for improving their awareness, motivating their self-transformation and for a better interaction between the self and their environment. The main theme of Self-Transcendence consisted of five sub-themes; self-compassion, gratitude, cognitive enhancement and emotional regulation and body-awareness.

3.2.1. Self Compassion

Participants reported that their self-compassion had increased after starting meditation. They realized over time that their performance related problems or failures were part of normal human life; therefore they became less judgmental towards themselves. They started to accept their problems such as experiencing stress during difficult times or feeling guilt or self-doubt. They saw self-compassion as a useful outcome of regular meditation practice.

Semih offered his story;

‘We can all punish ourselves. Vajracaksu once; “I am not enough, there are billions of people who believe unconditionally in their religion” Every human being has minor or major problems in their life. In this sense, I think that there is one thing that encourages people to be more loving towards them. This is meditation. I think that meditation reminds me of the importance of encouraging self-appreciation. In fact, I think that it is very nice to remind people how unnecessary self-punishment is. Of course, all these things are a result of your regular practice.’

Selin also had similar views:

‘I used to have a lot of suspicions about myself. I used to question my voice, like do I speak very well informed or am I imposing a lot of myself. For example, I have confidence in you when I talk to you right now. I trust the words. This is happening now. These are the results of a particular experience and it is not a big deal. People feel the confidence in your voice. This is the transformation of being my own instructor...I’m a human being. Other people also feel them. That is to say, this feeling, thought will come to mind now and pass. Here is a compassionate thing that a person can do to himself.’

3.2.2. Gratitude

We can see from the account below that gratitude is another dimension that brings participants spiritual satisfaction. Half of the participants declared that they had been looking to the glass half empty before they started meditating. Meditation guides them to feel gratitude towards what they have instead of desiring what's to come.

Ahmet explain what gratitude for him as; 'No matter what, things come and go. Putting a distance between the self and certain situations is a life experience. We have to appreciate the things we have. There will be always something missing in our lives but remembering the things we have, makes always feel better.'

3.2.3. Cognitive Enhancements

Mindfulness practice also appeared to impact on the cognitive abilities of the participants in terms of mental clarity, increased concentration and decision-making processes. The participants described that they began experiencing the positive cognitive effects of mindfulness practice in their work performance.

Learning how to allow anxious thoughts and feelings in the mindfulness exercises gives a clue to some of the participants in order to re-regulate themselves when they lost their concentration during work. Two participants spoke about how mindfulness practice increased their concentration.

'Vipassana retreats are so exciting in terms of cognitive abilities. I am not talking about solving a mathematical problem in less time, but to be able to answer what I ask of myself quicker. The mind feels healthy, concentrated and I feel that ability is enhancing.' Metin

Mental clarity is another key element of participants' experience of enhanced cognitive capacity. Participants reported a relative mental clarity especially after their routine meditation practice.

Semih said 'It is impossible to say exactly-but generally I end my practice with a sense of clarity and lucidness.'

Ömer has also supportive statements about the effect of mindfulness meditation on mental clarity stating that ‘Let’s say I am feeling depressed. I sit in meditation in the evening and I solve my problems so that I wake up to the following day refreshed and positive.’

Another point made participants was that they experienced better decision-making processes after starting mindfulness meditation. It seemed that they made more accurate when making decisions according to their comments.

Betül added,

‘My thoughts are a lot clearer. For example, I was thinking of going to a training program but equally I was indecisive and I let this thought go. I said ‘Okay, that is it, I will do this’. And it just happened suddenly.’

Didem remains calm with regular practicing and claimed that she stayed sharp in crunch times;

‘It helps me remain calm and not to panic in a moment of truth, not just during work. Meditation helps me make the best decisions. Yet, you can make a bad decision for example during driving and cause an accident.’

Mental clarity seemed to positively influence participants’ decision-making processes since their mind was not occupied with other thoughts. Onur reported that he has been making important decisions after meditating.

‘My life is passing by reading smart phone reviews. I limit myself to make concrete decisions after the practice but I do not think about the phone. I only try to clear my mind and I do it with a sense of mindfulness. My mind is not preoccupied but at the moment of calmness, something happens.’

3.2.4. Emotional Regulation

Another key dimension of practicing mindfulness regularly seems to be emotional regulation. As long as the participants gain meditation experience,

emotional regulation capacity improves according to some of the participants. They reported mainly that they had fewer mood disturbances and increased ability to regulate affects.

Ahmet defined emotional regulation as:

‘I got to know that my emotions are temporary and that I have to let them go when I am aware of them in Mindfulness Coaching training. I allow the positive/negative emotions to come and go. For me it is like a ferris wheel. Do not attach yourself when you are at the top and do not collapse when you are at the bottom.’

Betül thought that emotional regulation was about controlling and relaxing one’s mind and said, ‘Emotional regulation is possible when you get the control of the mind, this means relaxing the mind. I can say that the method is the meditation.’

3.2.5. Body Awareness

More than a half of the participants became aware of what their body needs and how to treat it. According to their comments they had treated badly in terms of not respecting to their bodies by having unhealthy feeding behaviors because of rush in urban. They mostly said that they used to have less time to eat, so that they used to prefer fast foods or they used to push themselves to attend every event and could not listen to their body and relax it.

Asrın shared his account;

‘I changed my feeding behaviors. I am not sure whether it is a direct result of starting doing meditation or just a thought cultivated in my mind as having a healthier life. I used to eat fast food or unhealthy meals. I changed it a year ago. Today I possibly eat healthier foods and take good care of my body. I image that I used to be like a food waste disposal.’

Ceylan used to go out two or three consecutive days. She felt tired but she has not been aware of her fatigue but she realized that was not a healthy situation;

‘At least I became aware of my fatigue. I used to go out two-three consecutive days. I cannot say to other people. Now, I am aware of my needs to be relaxed; I am aware that as a full time worker in weekdays, it is not healthy for me to go out every night. Therefore, if I have a night out, I stay home the other. Meditation has an obvious impact on my decisions by teaching me to listen my body and be aware of it when it is tired.’

Fatih had been in a meditation retreat for the first time in his life and he decided to lose weight.

‘Just after I started to come to meditation studio in October if I am not wrong. In the following January, I started to change my life. I used to be fat, I lost 10 kilos. I go both to gym and a nutritionist. I started to live the life quitter. For example I come to studio by walking.’

3.3. Self-transformation on work setting

This main theme consists of the effects of increased capabilities on participants’ experiences in their work environment. Participants reported a better and more positive understanding of their work environment with the help of increased awareness.

3.3.1. Interpersonal Relations

Nearly all of the participants have reported that their relation with superiors, clients, colleagues in the work context have changed positively. They used to take certain issues personal, which would lead to arguments, but now they have become more patient and compassionate towards others. Once they used to focus on what their superiors was saying to them now they focused on solutions.

They listen to the people more carefully since they became aware of their partners are also human so they could make mistakes.

‘Meditation allowed my attitude to be more polite and less problematic with the project teams I manage. Additionally, my working schedule runs a lot smoother. I guess it is a reflection of being calm in business. I do not ask irrelevant questions and divagate when I am calm. I avoid egotistic behaviors and focus on the job. Mindfulness meditation would be very useful in organizations in terms of improving communication and time management.’ Metin

In another example, it shows us that mindful workers could also cultivate compassion among the working group, which leads to open communication. Additionally, only one mindful employee could have an impact on the job environment. The saying goes, when the mind is at peace the world is at peace. This notion can be applied to the working environment.

‘I try setting the tone among my work group and inviting my colleagues to have more open dialogues instead of gossiping. Very often we see people gossiping. I always promote speaking in a good way with others. I believe it has an impact in the company.’ Ceylan

Ahmet who were a HR manager mentioned that he became more tolerant towards his subordinates. His new understanding in terms of careful listening opened a space for spreading new ideas. ‘I manage teams and it certainly improves the management such as being tolerant to subordinates, being open to different minds even the most ridiculous ones. Careful listening is mainly an important manner of transformation.’

Just a few participants mentioned that they are less concerned by external reward or recognition. They were more aware of their actions and have a professional attitude with job so that any critics from their superior changed neither their motivation nor their performance.

‘My superiors say that I am the most experienced employee in the office and ask me why I don’t lead other employees in terms of sharing my best practices and manage them. I have

been criticized many times regarding my attitude but I am not influenced by what they say. I do not care because I go to office to earn money. I do what I am asked for with a respectful manner but I do not find the meaning of my life in the business context.’ Ceylan

Another positive transformation after starting practicing meditation was to become open to compromise. Two participants declared that they did not get involve in disputes with their colleagues or superiors because they became tolerant and patient. They claimed that dwelling a subject made things worse. Now rather than giving emotional reactions they kept their personal judgments and focus on compromising.

Fatih said that he became more tolerant and focused on communication; I became more tolerant and quiet. I give reaction in some moments rather than being non-reactive. I focus more on communication.

Asrın had issues with his superior because his manager had some unprofessional behaviors yet he was trying to compromise with him.

‘He used to yell at me ‘Your performance is weak, God damn you!’ but after he felt sorry and apologized. Possibly he got caught in his nerves. I noded usually at him in terms of approving his comments. However, when I was right, I disproved him; which made him go crazy all the time. In every case I used to be blamed. Now, I am trying to meet halfway. I say that he is right no matter what and I will do my best and I apologize. By doing so, we have a better relation. I also think that he got bored since he does not get what he expects from me. He stopped yelling at me. Probably he sensed the change in me.’

3.3.2. Work Related Consumption Patterns

The awareness that came with mindfulness meditations became also a reason to criticize their preferences, namely their socialization and consumption

patterns as regards to their work. They believed that being white collar had unique challenges. They had to be in a competition with their colleagues to be the chickest. Some of the participants are still in that race while others started to be aware of the condition and resist it. Some of them said that the clothing was very decisive in shaping their colleagues opinions about oneself. Some other participants believed that they had to socialize with others only in trendy places, fancy restaurants but at the same time they found this quiet unnecessary for most of the time. These circumstances let them separate their normal life and work life. In brief, some of the participants saw the work life as a well-defined environment and they have been trying to fit by wearing the things they would not like or eating in fancy restaurants where they would not go normally. With awareness they managed to realize what they actually wished for and what they needed to do to attain it.

Betül said that her social environment in workplace affected her consumption patterns;

‘My social environment affects my consumption matter with a good or bad grace. Actually it is very boring for me having a luxurious car or dining in fancy restaurants but we meet there; so does the shopping. However people start to resemble with whom they get socialized. Rotten apple spoils the barrel.’

Görkem was a lawyer and needed to participate daily meetings. In their company, they felt the community pressure to follow the trends.

‘I have to attend many meetings; therefore I have to follow new trends and not to wear something twice in row. I have to be always elegant otherwise I feel myself judged by the others. There is no possible way to get rid of the community pressure. If I wear not a stylish outwear, I will be judged immediately. Unfortunately, it is merciless.’

Didem was a highly skilled employee who felt herself in a competition with her colleagues and mentioned that money she earned came with a burden on her shoulders;

‘There is a huge car park full of luxurious cars. The bank I have been working for is an international bank and work environment is brutal. Everyone carries a bag from the same brand. Everybody is in a competition to be the chicest by wearing stylish Italian shoes. If someone buys a new bag, you have to buy too. Credit cards allow us to shop limitless. Purchasing power of the employees is strong but I am not anymore in competition with them. I used to go to Italy to shopping every year but it was changed in 2009.’

After her transformation started in 2009, she did not prefer any fancy bags but a random cloth bag.

‘Spending 7000 EU to a bag sounds ridiculous. Instead I use a cloth bag and I feel happier. It only costs 5TL. I was using special protection boxes before I put my bags into an x-ray machine. Hence upon, life is easier and happier with a cloth bag.’

Asrın complained about the necessities that came along with being a white collar;

‘We are obligated to wear a white shirt, suit, and tie but I am not that kind of a human. I always have to buy a new one if the old one wore off. For example, we are going to socialize with 3 or 4 friends. We eat and drink outside. We cannot go to a cheap bar where the students have fun. We usually go to an elite café or restaurant but it becomes a necessity to get socialized.’

Görkem had similar comments. She felt alienated because her colleagues preferred to spend time in trendy places;

‘I have moved away from my own social and colleague environments for the reason that they usually prefer going to trendy and gyp joint places that I dislike. They want to be in that places due to having an experience in there instead of sparing time with me. Hence I am vegetarian, I do not make correspond with them. I prefer going bohem; reasonably priced places where i can eat vegetarian foods and spend have some quality time with friends. However they have trend perception for places to just be there. Therefore, I have been excluded from banal Istanbul lifestyle.’

3.3.3. Job Satisfaction

Most of the participants see their job simply as a source of income, which supports their life, but they do not get any inner satisfaction from their duty. Achieved targets, bonuses, promotions assure only material satisfaction. Participants developed an objective relationship with the job as their livelihood yet they do not seek any ulterior motive or purpose at work. They have a desire to find a more meaningful job. Something that gives better meaning or purpose to their lives.

When Didem was asked whether her job satisfied her or not, she answered as below:

‘Once I started practicing meditation, I realized I was only working for making money. It used to be satisfying but now all I want to do is earn money for another 4 years and then live another life. I have been working for one of the most successful companies in Turkey. I earn quiet good but it is not my choice, it is faith.’

After her comments she was asked again what would satisfy her, Didem replied:

‘I want to spend more time in nature; I am bored of being in a golden cage. I have always been working in luxurious

skyscrapers in excellent conditions. I want to be on the street. I want to take my time back. I sold my time between 9am to 6 pm and now I want it back.'

Metin also found it hard to find any inner satisfaction in a corporate company. He reported that he found personal meaning in other areas and spaces than work. He was working for a telecommunication company and says:

'I was satisfied with my job. I still have illusionary satisfactions. I feel like I accomplish a task or for example, I am satisfied when I present good arguments to my clients. It is awesome but in the great scheme of things I do not want to spend time with these little satisfactions. I want to have different satisfactions.' Metin

Has your search for purpose changed? (Researcher)

'It has not changed, but I try and find purpose in different areas of my life. That is the reason why my general life satisfaction has increased so far. I find meaning but not in the work I have been doing. I am just happy to be able to earn money in this job to finance my future plans.' Metin

As Metin mentioned above half of the participants started to discover themselves and what they would like to do in their life as a profession. Participants claimed that their performance is positively correlated with their job satisfaction as well as realizing their potential. They wanted to use more of their potential for a more meaningful purpose in their life.

Onur believed that happiness, the success of purpose could be attained in a working environment but he also believed that the job he had, did not unearth his true potential; 'I think that I have certainly have the potential of making a positive impact on people, and I probably wont stop until I have found the right career to do so.'

Ceylan had also intention to find a more meaningful job;

‘I make an effort to find a more meaningful job. I do not want to enslave myself. I do not assume that I will be doing this job until my retirement. I have an intension to find a more meaningful job.’

Selin has already changed her carrier after practicing meditation and moved to a foreign country. She stated:

‘I think that I was not successful in my former company because I did not get any satisfaction from it. Now I am working with my full potential because I’m putting all my effort into it. I have found a training company here. I think my performance improved since my satisfaction has improved.’

Betül has also changed her carrier; she worked as a herbalist but continued to work as a content editor. Putting the regular mindfulness practice in the center of her life, gave her a lead through being helpful to other people by assuring well-being and gave her inner satisfaction. She described her situation as: I am satisfied with all the jobs I have been doing. Each one serves for another purpose. Herbalism ensures me inner satisfaction and content editing gives me material satisfaction.

3.3.4. Occupational Stress

The participants have been less affected by the occupational stress after practicing mindfulness meditation but there are still stressors and they have been getting exposed to them such as heavy workload, short deadlines, work inequity, multi-dimensional job definitions etc. They were not expecting that the stress disappears but they started to deal with it more skillfully in terms of understanding where exactly they felt it and developing more convenient coping skills. For example, Ali thought that he had been treated with inequality when it came to him versus other colleagues and even though his superiors were informed about the situation, nothing has yet been done about it. This inequality made him stressed. Ahmet also reported occupational stress regarding his job definition. He had a multi-dimensional job that brought him a busy schedule.

Ceylan reported that she and her colleagues were complaining about the workplace climate:

‘Generally, everybody in the office has a hurry to deliver their projects, for example, a presentation, a report etc. and we have been doing those in a stressful way since the turnover is high. We are negatively influenced by this situation. We do not have good work conditions.’

Onur perceived stress particularly when he had short deadlines; sometimes I have to finish what I am asked for in a relatively short time sometimes in 10-15 minutes. It makes me stressed. I do not take it on me personally but the work is stressful.

Some participants agreed that being financially dependent on their work is the main stressor since the loss of a job means financial insecurity. One-third of the participants touched on the importance of income and the necessity of working in their life and they could not think about the consequences of being unemployed.

Betül explained as; ‘You feel like you have to do that job because you earn money and without any salary you feel like you will have troubles in your life.’

3.3.5. Coping Skills

The fourth sub-theme is the coping skills. They experienced different problems in their work and developed new coping skills in order not to get emotionally influenced by the events. Most of the participants agreed that stress never disappears but they try to become aware of stressful moments and not take it on themselves. They seem to have developed different coping skills in order to regulate their emotions with the help of regular meditation practice. While they develop new coping skills against occupational stress, the participants used their awareness they have been gaining by practicing meditation and started to look at the events more skillfully. When participants remained non-judgmental against the events, they do not get emotional nor attached certain personal meanings to

the events. This helps them not to be influenced by the ‘monkey mind’ that took them to ruminate the events in their mind. In other words, emotional regulation plays an important role for the sake of staying emotionally neutral against the negative situations. A participant told that they knew that the events are temporal as well as their emotions. This led them to manage their anger and be level-headed. Additionally, they allowed themselves to have a break in the middle of difficult times. Mindfulness meditation advises that everything is temporary. Participants used to treat situations, thoughts and emotions as if they were permanent. They go as they come. If they remembered this knowledge in a routine, it would prevent them to ruminate their thoughts, beliefs and foresight in their mind.

Betül expressed her thoughts about the impermanence of things:

‘Everything is temporary. It is the best precept from Vipassana. When something happens it will pass whether I get stressed or not. I invite myself to observe the events from an outer look and think that there is no need to harm myself.’

Görkem had similar comments;

‘You do not realize that things are temporary. At least I could not notice that because I used to think uncomfortable feelings would last forever. With that perceived stress I was ruined and got stuck in desperation. Particularly in our vipassana meditation courses, they reminded us that everything is temporary and achievable. I ask myself whether this task is the end of the world or not. Thereby I regulate my emotions.’

Some of the participants told that they used to have difficulty in controlling their temper in difficult situations in their work environment. Onur defined himself as an aggressive person. He said; ‘I could lose my temper easily when things in my private life or work life got worse and I could hurt others unintentionally.’ According to him, mindfulness practice was a very helpful tool in order to manage his anger. After a long mindfulness experience, he said, he

became a man without temper: 'Even though someone insults me, it could be a matter of pride but now I remain calm and I do not care.'

Fatih had also an anger management issue especially while driving to office or back home in rush hours. He used to be a furious driver and conveyed his opinions;

'For example I was very furious and I have teased other drivers. Still I am mad and I react senseless. While my daughter is sitting at the backside on the board, I was disputing with random guys on the road. What if someone shots me? I was pulling out in front of someone else. I was reacting nonsense and I did not have any difference from them.'

Being level headed was another coping strategy with WRS and being level headed meant being mentally well balanced and in control of oneself in difficult situations. It was also an important outcome in workplace setting since the participants had to deal with a significant amount of work and they had to be multi-tasking in order to complete their duties in time.

Selin said that mindfulness had helped her to become more level-headedness. She expressed her thoughts as;

'While I work on computer, suddenly my daughter comes in and wants to play with me. I get nervous and feel tight. I immediately realize my tension and ask myself what is more important? To play with my daughter or to write this e-mail? If it is writing that e-mail, I talk to my child and ask for 20 minutes. I write the e-mail and go play with her.'

Fatih had also supportive comments regarding being level headedness. He underlined the importance of prioritization. He stated;

'All the tasks come on your desk with high priority. It works smoothly when you distinguish upon their importance and manage them. In the contrary case, if you act like they have the same importance you burn yourself out.'

Do you think that meditation helps you to deliver the projects on time? (Researcher)

‘It does because you see that the worst part is to piss into the wind. Time passes and you chase for irrelevant things. Meditation helps you to evaluate things calmer and steer your energy cleverly.’

Some of the participants shared that giving a break was also an efficient coping strategy against WRS. They usually gave a three minutes breathing space and focused on their breath and tried to leave the thoughts and emotions behind. They got prepared to their new tasks.

According to Melis, sometimes she had to deal with several tasks in the same time and she needed to prioritize them but sometimes she could not and had to confront her manager;

‘Sometimes all the tasks come in one minute and I have to prioritize them; I had to delay some of them. It happens and I have to confront my manager. He has a sharp personality and wants everything done immediately that stresses me a lot. I give myself 2-3 minutes and try to think nothing, literally nothing. I try to do some breathing exercise. After 2-3 minutes I continue on working and control my nerves to say nothing wrong.’

Onur had supportive comments to Melis. He gave a break and did 10 minutes meditation before he started a heavy duty to get mentally prepared. He claimed that giving a short break increased his concentration.

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION

This study mainly aims to explore how white-collar employees make sense of mindfulness meditation as regards to their work experiences. The study particularly focuses on decision to start practicing mindfulness meditation, perceived effects of mindfulness on individuals' daily work experiences, and particular meanings attached to their job and work stressors.

The main finding of the study is that participants decided to practice mindfulness meditation as a tool or in their search for psychological well-being. Some of the participants made it explicit that they have started meditating following a mental breakdown in their lives. Findings also indicate that some practitioners initially expected a miracle in a short period of time because they thought meditation would bring them joy, happiness and make them better as soon as they started their practice. However, they soon recognized that it was a demanding practice that required important amount of commitment. Practitioners also become aware that mindfulness meditation brought positive as well as negative feelings so sometimes they confronted their traumas and negative sensations during their practice. Participants practiced mindfulness regularly to sustain a healthy mindset, and it was their dedication and perseverance that kept their mind at ease and in balance. The more they practice, the more they feel that they can unleash the true potential of their mind like heightened self-awareness.

Another finding of the study is the importance of self-compassion developed through mindfulness meditation. As self-compassion gets stronger, participants become less judgmental towards themselves and have peace of mind. Thus, as long as the participants continue their daily practice; they see the upcoming events as a challenge instead of a threat because they quit judging themselves for every failure, and this allows them to enjoy new experiences. Accordingly, the level of acceptance towards themselves and others rise and gratitude become important priorities in their lives. They seem to think that others may make wrong decisions or fail and that to err is human. Accordingly, they feel

improved in their ability to understand others' perspectives. These results are in line with previous studies on mindfulness meditation (Dekeyser et al., 2008; Fulton, 2018; O'Leary & Dockray, 2015; Rodriguez-Carvajal et al., 2016; Swickert et al., 2018)

Meditation techniques can be grouped according to their purpose and among them mindfulness meditation is for cultivating concentration which is directly related to cognitive enhancements. It works by diminishing the number of thoughts and eventually making one's mind calmer. Thoughts or emotions passing through in one's mind, oscillating between past and the future, keeps the mind constantly busy and hamper it to be calmer. However, mindfulness meditation teaches techniques of having a quitter mind. Practitioners are encouraged to recognize that thoughts and emotions are not permanent; they come and go. This principle of mindfulness seems to lead the current study's participants to have mental clarity, which is also associated with decreased anxiety and stress level. From the perspective of the interviewees, mental clarity also comes with awareness, increased concentration and better decision-making processes. These results also support findings of the previous studies (Jha et al., 2010; Karelaiia & Reb, 2014; Müller, 2016, Roeser et al., 2013)

Emotional regulation is also an important outcome of regular mindfulness practice. Practitioners became aware that emotions are temporary so they did not attach too much upon feelings and sensations they used to do, and they became more stable. Stability facilitated their self-regulation, which was an important tool for not to getting caught in stress quickly in their workplace. Self-regulation also seemed to decrease people's dependency on automatic mental processes or reactions. Therefore, participants tended not to behave automatically according to their usual habits and prejudices Participants' viewpoints align intently with findings of Chambers et al. (2009), Eberth and Seddmeier (2012), Hülsheger (2013). Some of the participants mentioned that they set the tone in workplace as Good et al indicated in their study (2016).

According to Van der Veer (2016), many practitioners found that mindfulness meditation also facilitates physical and body awareness because they

scan their bodies, focus their attention to their breath and become more mindful about their body sensations.

Many of the participants in this research reported an improvement in their relationships with others. This is especially evident in their work environment. Participants do not take the matters personally and they are more prone to accept others with their mistakes at work. They avoid arguments, try to actively listen to the others, be calm towards them and orient towards a solution. The theme of better relationships with co-workers was also underlined by Boyatzis and McKee (2005) and Wallace and Shapiro (2006). Moreover, in line with Dekeyser (2008) and Reb et al, (2014) findings suggest that superiors' attitudes may change toward their subordinates.

The current study also suggests that the corporate culture have significant effects on white collars' consumption patterns such as what they wear, where they go for holiday or where to eat or drink. As a social being, people are influenced by their colleagues or by the group and they act accordingly to the unspoken but agreed social norms. In other words, their wish to minimize their lives is in conflict with corporate culture consumption patterns. Some participants in this study reported that they felt an obligation to follow the fashion trends in order not to be criticized by their colleagues or not to feel left out. Therefore, they buy things they do not need, with money they do not have to impress people whom they do not like (Palahniuk, 1999). The same mechanism works for their travel destinations. They need to go to different destinations so that they obtain new topics to tell their colleagues and strengthen their presence. Mindfulness meditation leads practitioners to be aware of mechanisms behind their attitudes and impulses to do shopping, to go to trendy places and destinations. They realize that their consumption only brings happiness for a short time but it does not fulfill their desires. Some participants seem to relatively break their routines as much as they can or company policies permits. On the other side if this situation cannot be changed in their workplace, it can become a stressor for the practitioner and his or her job satisfaction decreases.

According to quantitative research literature on mindfulness (Hülshager, Alberts, Feinholdt, & Lang, 2013), job satisfaction is positively correlated with mindfulness meditation. However, in this study job satisfaction is found to be relatively low. Participants reported that they think their current job is a consequence of their faith. They did not make any conscious career choices but they had to find a job for their survival. Some participants underlined that they do what they are asked for in a respectful way and earn money in return. The job becomes only a resource of income but not more than that. They perceive the mindfulness meditation, as a tool to find out their purpose in life and their job does not provide them with any meaningful purpose.

Deci, Ryan, Schutz and Niemiec (2015) argue that mindfulness guides individuals towards personal growth rather than abundance or reputation. This may be a reason for why some participants consider changing their career and some of them have already changed and are better satisfied. From this perspective, mindfulness-based interventions might bring some contradictions for the Human Resources departments which are supportive to apply MBI's for their employees in order to benefit from positive outcomes such as decreased stress, decreased anxiety and improved leadership, improved employee well-being but at the same time MBI's might influence employee's search for meaning and reduce their job satisfaction which can so that companies may lose qualified employees in long-term.

Participants have different duration of experience regarding the mindfulness meditation and some of them who have longer experience can express their thoughts and emotions clearer than the ones who has less experience. That is the reason why there are more samples from experienced participants in the results chapter. Moreover, there is not found any systematic difference between men and women in the research but unsystematically women feel the pressure of the group norms more than men regarding the consumption patterns. Men and women feel the occupational stress equally and has the same level of job satisfaction.

It is also beneficial to consider that the negative relationship between mindfulness and changing career is a common theme among the participants. Mindfulness has an impact on individuals to evaluate themselves and see external reality with a greater clarity. Employees may have value conflicts or their job simply does not meet their expectations, if so mindful employees may be more likely to leave the organization if they can get a better or more meaningful job elsewhere. As an additional factor, person-job fit, individual and cultural specifications may also play an important role in job satisfaction. If there is no fit, an employee may blame himself or the organization for being unsatisfied with their job. Mindful people may be more aware of such issues, and external attribution rather than an internal attribution might be a reason behind the career change. New research can focus on examining such moderating factors to understand the role of mindfulness in work settings.

4.1. Limitations of the Current Study and Recommendations for Future Research

There are some limitations in the present study. Qualitative studies employ small samples, which cannot represent all white-collar mindfulness practitioners. Thus, it is not possible to make probabilistic generalizations. Rather, this study provides thick and rich descriptions of particular individuals as regards to their experience of mindfulness. Therefore, there is a need for further studies, especially qualitative ones, to see if findings are transferable to different settings. Moreover, this study employs one approach, thematic analysis, among other to understand participants' experiences. This is a general theme analysis rather than a more detailed analysis of each individual case. This might result in a uniform picture of participants through each of them had unique stories. Therefore, future studies might employ other methods like narrative analysis to gain further insights into subjective experiences of mindfulness.

The participants in this study, participants are working adults; they have different years of experience in mindfulness practice and their reason to start meditating is mostly personal issues and personal interest. It is not clear that

results can be generalized to employees when they take mindfulness training in the workplace by the request of human resource department. Mindfulness training programs are applied in the organizations with acceleration. These programs are mostly applied to the employees without their knowledge of how and why these programs work. It can be argued that interested individuals would benefit more than the ones who are obliged to have a mindfulness based intervention in their organizations. Thus, future research may focus on experiences of mindfulness mediation or related practices among relatively new practitioners who are asked or requested to practice by HR departments.

Current study ensures substantial evidence that mindfulness has positive outcomes for employees and organizations such as employee well being and interpersonal relations. Scholars may extend this investigation by exploring dynamics through which mindfulness affects employee well being and interpersonal relations; they can also examine under which conditions mindfulness can have negative outcomes. Moreover, research on workplace mindfulness needs a more detailed assessment of individual differences (e.g. attitudes, personality, intellect) that may bring different explanations for the effect of mindfulness.

Research about the correlation between mindfulness and job satisfaction suggest that they are positively correlated. Nevertheless in this research, job satisfaction is linked to meaning in life. When employees get to understand that their meaning in life is not related to career development or status, they tend to change their job. Therefore, more research is required to clarify whether there is a positive or negative relationship between job satisfaction and practicing mindfulness meditation. Studies may specify the conditions in which mindfulness decreases or increases job satisfaction.

Another direction for future researches in business context that the relation between mindfulness and ethical behavior. Particularly, it is interesting to see whether mindfulness leads to act more ethically or not in interpersonal relationships. Concordantly, it will be important for the future studies to understand which aspects of mindfulness refer to ethical behavior. Mindfulness

may direct employees to behave more honestly and to use a principled approach to ethical decision-making.

4.2. Implications of the Current Study

Mindfulness is linked to numerous positive psychological improvements, which can be assessed by personnel decisions. It can be especially important for job selection that requires critical attributes, for example self-regulation and interpersonal relations. Moreover, applying mindfulness trainings with other training formats such as leadership, teamwork might improve the positive effects of those trainings by facilitating changes in attention and cognition.

Practicality is also another dimension of mindfulness meditation and trainings. Since it requires a routine practice discipline to benefit from its positive effects. However, it is hard to surveil employees' practices. Therefore, it has to be clearly defined to the employees that minimum how much time on practicing lead to improve their attributes in doses. Moreover, in the last decade employee well-being is gaining importance and people are becoming more aware of how to increase their well-being such as doing yoga and meditation but there is a lack of space and time to practice. Hence it might be a good to create a recreation space where employees can practice yoga and meditation in between the work so that their performance may increase and their level of stress may decreases.

Mindfulness trainings bring resilience if an individual has a routine practice and change his attitudes in positive manner. This situation can support individuals in their interpersonal relations or career ambitions, which might go against companies' corporate culture if it is highly competitive.

Business life is competitive in every aspect from the individual level to organizational level. This is the reason why companies and organizations need employees with high performance for success in the competitive business environment and mindfulness seems to be a valuable tool for some individuals.

4.3. Conclusion

Through this study, it is attempted to attract attention to a relatively new and popular issue and its potential effects in work settings. For the last two

decades, many studies have been executed by scholars and practitioners and it was seen that mindfulness has positive effects on individuals' work and personal lives. A growing number of researches show that mindfulness increases mental and physical health, regulate emotions and improve well-being. As a consequence, organizations have started to apply mindfulness trainings for their employees. Nevertheless I/O psychology literature still lacks of further studies focusing on evaluating the effects of mindfulness meditation and programs in workplace. Hopefully, this study arouses new ideas about mindfulness at work.



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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Results of Evaluation of The Ethics Committee

ETİK KURUL DEĞERLENDİRME SONUCU/RESULT OF EVALUATION BY THE ETHICS COMMITTEE

(Bu bölüm İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurul tarafından doldurulacaktır/This section to be completed by the Committee on Ethics in research on Humans)

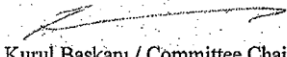
Başvuru Sahibi / Applicant: Abdullah Buğra Oygur

Proje Başlığı / Project Title: A Qualitative Resarch on the effects of Mindfulness at Work

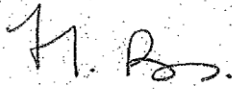
Proje No. / Project Number: 2017-20024-95

1.	Herhangi bir değişikliğe gerek yoktur / There is no need for revision	XX
2.	Ret/ Application Rejected Reddin gerekçesi / Reason for Rejection	

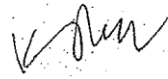
Değerlendirme Tarihi / Date of Evaluation: 21 Kasım 2017


Kurul Başkanı / Committee Chair

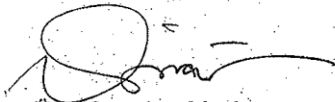
Doç Dr. İtir Erhart


Üye / Committee Member


Prof. Dr. Hale Bolak


Üye / Committee Member

Prof. Dr. Koray Akay


Üye / Committee Member


Doç Dr. Ayhan Özgür Toy


Üye / Committee Member

Prof. Dr. Aslı Tunç

Üye / Committee Member

Prof. Dr. Turgut Tarhanlı


Üye / Committee Member

Prof. Dr. Ali Demirci

Appendix B: Informed Consent Form

Gönüllü Katılım Formu

Bu çalışma; İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Örgütsel Psikoloji Yüksek Lisans öğrencisi Abdullah Buğra Oygur tarafından Mindfulness meditasyonunun iş yaşamına etkilerini değerlendirmek üzere tasarlanmıştır.

Çalışma, Dr.Öğr.Üyesi Bahar Tanyaş yönetiminde İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Endüstriyel ve Örgütsel Psikoloji Yüksek Lisans öğrencisi Abdullah Buğra Oygur tarafından gerçekleştirilmektedir. Mülakatın yaklaşık 1 saat sürmesi planlanmaktadır. Mülakatlardan elde edilen veri tekil olarak kullanılmayacak, tüm katılımcılardan alınan cevaplar bir veri havuzunda bir araya getirilecek ve analizler bu toplam veri üzerinde yapılacaktır; elde edilen bulgular sadece bilimsel amaçla kullanılacaktır.

Araştırmamızda yer alan soruların katılımcılarımız açısından olumsuz etkileri olması beklenmemektedir. Çalışmaya katılımınız tamamen isteğe bağlıdır. Çalışma sırasında sebep bildirmeksizin çalışmayı bırakabilirsiniz ya da cevap vermek istemediğiniz soruları yine gerekçe belirtmeden atlayabilirsiniz.

Çalışmada ses kayıt yöntemi kullanılacaktır. Ses kaydı almayı, mülakat sırasında hiçbir bilgiyi atlamamak için istiyoruz. Ses kayıtlarının daha sonra çözümlemesi ve içerik analizi yapılacaktır. Ses kaydı esnasında ismininiz ve şirket isminin telaffuz edilmemesine özen gösterilecektir. Bu bilgiler konuşmada geçer ise kayıtlardan silinecektir.

Ses kaydı alınmasını tercih etmezseniz, araştırmacılarımız mülakat esnasında detaylı şekilde not alacaklardır. Ses kaydı alınmasını kabul etmeniz dahi mülakat sırasında dilediğiniz zaman araştırmacıdan ses kaydını durdurmasını talep edebilirsiniz. Ses kayıtları katılımcı numarası verilerek saklanacaktır, bu sayede katılımcı bilgileri gizli tutulacaktır.

Araştırmaya katıldıktan sonra herhangi bir sorunuz olduğu takdirde Buğra Oygur (bugraoygur@hotmail.com) ile irtibata geçebilirsiniz.

Yukarıdaki çalışmanın amacını ve içeriğini belirten bildiriye okudum, anladım ve araştırmaya katılmayı

Kabul ediyorum ()

Etmiyorum ()

Ses kaydı alınmasını

Kabul ediyorum ()

Etmiyorum ()

Katılımcının imzası:

Araştırmacının imzası ve iletişim bilgileri:

Tarih:

Varsa Katılımcının Vekilinin

Adı-Soyadı:.....

İmzası:.....

Appendix C: Interview Questions

Meditation Experiences

- Could you give me brief history of how you have started practicing meditation?
- Where did you start doing meditation? In a yoga studio or by yourself?
- How long have been doing meditation? What is the frequency?
- How long do you meditate nonstop? How long was it in the beginning?
- Where do you meditate? Do you need spare time for meditation or can you do it wherever, whenever?
- If you had to describe what meditation means to you, what would you say?
- Could you describe what happens during meditation?
- How do you feel yourself physically before and after meditation?
- Well, have you ever notice any emotional change?
- Is there also mental change before and after meditation?
- How does meditation affect your everyday life?

Consumption Patterns

- How would you describe your consumption patterns?
- How would you describe yourself during shopping?
- What is important for you when you do shopping?
- Have you ever noticed any change on the products you buy on the internet since doing meditation?
- What sort of places you would like to go on holiday?
- What criteria do you apply while choosing your car and the neighborhood you desire to live?

- What specification do you mind when you go out for a cafe, a drink or a meal?
- Do you think that the enterprise you work for affects your consumption patterns?
- Do you want to change any of your consumption patterns? What are they?
- Has practicing regularly meditation made a difference to how you consume? How?

Time Management

- Could you please talk about your work schedule?
- Do you need to make overtime?
- Is time management important for finance industry?
- If so, would you please let us know the reasons?
- Do you think that the regular meditation practice help you with time management?
- Do you think that you manage time wisely with regular meditation practice?
- How do you spend your free time within work hours?
- What do you talk about with your colleagues?
- What do you do in your free time in order blow off steam you get from work?
- Has practicing regularly meditation made a difference to how you spend your time?

Stress Management

- Do you think that you have a stressful job?

- What factors make your job stressful?
- How does a stressful job affect yourself and your life?
- How do you overcome this situation?
- Does doing meditation make you less stressful? How?
- What has changed your perception of stress? How does it change?

Job Satisfaction

- Do you get any satisfaction from your job?
- What satisfies you? Would you please tell us a little bit?
- Can you compare your satisfaction level before and after starting meditation?
- What has changed?
- What are the factors that increases or decreases the level of satisfaction?
- Would you like to change your career?