

Exploring the Role of Mindfulness in Enhancing Emotional Intelligence and Leadership in the Business World

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Abstract: Leadership effectiveness and emotional intelligence (EI) are other aspects that have been of key importance in determining organizational success in the fast-changing business world. Although the notion of mindfulness as a psychological practice has become popular because of the possibility of improving individual well-being, the impact of this practice on emotional intelligence and leadership in the business domain is under-researched. The paper explores the connection between mindfulness and emotional intelligence, and how the two aspects can be used to achieve better leadership performance in the workplace. Study's mission is to fill this gap by questioning how mindfulness training might help individuals become more emotionally aware, regulated, and interpersonally skilled, which are the key elements of emotional intelligence. This research is a quantitative survey with mixed methodology using quantitative studies to assess mindfulness, EI, and leadership effectiveness, and qualitative interviews to enable the understanding of the experiences of business leaders. Early evidence indicates that there is a positive correlation between mindfulness practices and emotional regulation and empathy, which eventually lead to better leadership performance. Mindful leaders have a stronger capacity to deal with stress, demonstrate adaptive leadership styles, and provide facilitating work conditions, which eventually translate into better organizational performance. The implications of this study can be that mindfulness training programs have the potential to be a useful tool in developing EI and leadership within the business, and they will provide a useful intervention in the development of leadership. This paper is relevant to the current debate on leadership development by linking mindfulness to the fundamental leadership competencies and offering an idea to practitioners who want to maximize business performance by applying emotional intelligence.

Keywords: Mindfulness; emotional intelligence; leadership; business performance; organizational behavior.

I. Introduction

The leadership skills in the contemporary business world are becoming more and more reliant on the capacity of an individual to negotiate complicated interpersonal relations, handle pressure, and create a favorable work culture. Although the conventional leadership criteria, e.g., the ability to think strategically and make decisions, are still significant when it comes to long-term success, emotional intelligence (EI) has become one of the decisive factors. High-EI leaders are better placed to comprehend and regulate their own emotions, perceive emotions in other people, and act on them to make decisions and take actions. Although the importance of EI in leadership is increasingly being realized, little is understood about incorporating mindfulness into the EI framework. The

concept of mindfulness, commonly defined as the capacity to draw attention to the current moment without being judgmental, has been receiving considerable levels of attention as a factor that has positive implications for individual well-being and psychological stability. However, the potential contribution to emotional intelligence and leadership is an area that remains largely untapped in terms of research. The cognitive flexibility, emotional regulation, and stress management skills, which form emotional intelligence and effective leadership, have been found to be developed through mindfulness techniques such as meditation, breath work, and consciousness (Long et al., 2025). The practices empower the leadership to be more receptive to challenges; they react to them more clearly, empathically, and emotionally, which leads to better leadership performance.

The gap in empirical research that specifically examines the relationship between mindfulness, EI, and leadership in the business environment is significant, even though theoretically, it is clear that mindfulness has connections with EI and leadership. The literature available is very biased to the advantages of mindfulness to personal well-being, or it can be used to reduce stress; however, not many studies have investigated the direct influences of mindfulness on leadership performance, especially when it comes to the emotional intelligence factor (Zhang et al., 2025). The proposed study will fill this gap by exploring and determining the importance of mindfulness in improving emotional intelligence and leadership in the business world. In particular, the study will consider the implications of mindfulness practices on major dimensions of EI, including self-awareness, self-regulation, and empathy, and vice versa, on the behaviors and performance of leaders. The study questions will be the following:

- What role does mindfulness play in creating emotional intelligence among business leaders?
- What effect does mindfulness have on leadership performance in organizations?
- Will mindfulness-based interventions enhance the quality of emotional intelligence and leadership?

This research aims to gain further insight into how mindfulness can be used as an instrument of enhancing both emotional intelligence and leadership as a means of bringing success to businesses and well-being to people in the business sphere.

II. Literature Review

Mindfulness, emotional intelligence (EI), and leadership effectiveness are constructs that are interrelated and which are being given escalating research in management studies (Coronado-Maldonado & Benítez-Márquez, 2023). Mindfulness, which has a very broad definition as the act of non-judgmental attention to the present moment, is found to positively affect the mental and emotional processes. It boosts emotional control, stress management, and self-consciousness, which are all necessary in successful leadership (Tenschert et al., 2025). Mindfulness also allows people to develop the skill to pay attention, be calm when faced with stress, and react to demanding circumstances with wisdom and compassion. These are the cognitive and emotional advantages that make mindfulness an effective leadership development tool because leaders with high mindfulness scores can

more easily control their emotions and treat their teams in a supportive and constructive way Du & Xie, (2025). On the other hand, emotional intelligence is one of the determinants of leadership effectiveness (Bhuvaneshwari & Ramesh, 2025; Al-Kazemi et al., 2025). EI involves being able to identify and interpret personal feelings, know how to handle these feelings, identify other people's feelings, and apply the information regarding the emotions to influence behavior and decision-making (Yaghoobi et al., 2016). Similarly, good interpersonal relations, conflict resolution, and group dynamics are associated with high EI and make leaders effective. Leaders with high emotional intelligence tend to do well in situations when interpersonal relations are complex because they make sensible decisions under pressure and bring together their team members for trust and collaboration (Lu et al., 2025). The success of the leadership is assessed both objectively and subjectively – that is, the performance of teams, employee satisfaction, and success of an organization. Effective leaders possess various abilities, including the skill to inspire others, manage conflict situations and make right decisions. Mindfulness can develop these competencies through increasing emotional self-control, empathy, and effective communication, and therefore, improve the outcome of leadership (Baykal & Bayraktar, 2025). Mindful leaders are more likely to be attentive, stress-resistant and flexible in their problem-solving (Ravikumar & Muralidharan, 2025).

Despite the considerable literature that has been developed on topics such as mindfulness, emotional intelligence, and leadership, there is still a lack of empirical research that specifically investigates the link between mindfulness and emotional intelligence as well as the resultant leadership in a business setting (Coronado-Maldonado & Benítez-Márquez, 2023). Although there is limited research on the topic of mindfulness in regards to one's well-being and coping with stress, there is even less research on its direct impact on the performance of leaders in particular, as far as emotional intelligence is concerned (Gowindasamy, 2018). The available literature is usually disseminated because the researchers have considered a single aspect at a time, as opposed to investigating the combined impact of mindfulness and emotional intelligence in influencing leadership. This information gap in the literature highlights that additional studies are necessary to determine how mindfulness could promote emotional intelligence and leadership in business (Salameh-Ayanian et al., 2025). In particular, it is necessary to consider how mindfulness practices can assist leaders to become more self-aware, regulate emotions, and empathic, which are the main elements of emotional intelligence (Asmamaw & Semela, 2023). The proposed study will help bring useful lessons to the processes of enhancing the effectiveness of leadership and organizational performance through the application of mindfulness as a tool to increase these parameters.

2.1. Theoretical Framework

The connection between mindfulness and emotional intelligence (EI) is discussed in the framework of such frameworks as Trait Emotional Intelligence and Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Theory (MBCT). One trait of EI, as defined by Petrides, is emotional self-perceptions that affect the ability to control emotions, in which mindfulness results in increased self-awareness, which is essential in controlling emotions. This relation argues that people who

are highly emotionally aware can easily cope with the challenges arising between people, especially under pressure. MBCT supplements this connection by fostering mindfulness so that automatic thought patterns can be disrupted, thereby enhancing emotional control and interpersonal abilities. This creates a greater awareness of emotional triggers, which can greatly improve the decision-making, conflict resolution, and management of a team by the leaders. The hypothesized relationships in the light of these theoretical premises comprise the following: the more mindful is a person, the more self-aware they can become, and the more self-aware one is the more emotional intelligence is developed, and thus, the better one can control his or her emotions thus becoming a better leader; the more mindful one is, the more he or she can regulate his or her emotions thus becoming a better leader; and finally, the more mindful a person is, the more he or she can be a better leader through better control of his or her emotions and more empathy. Fig. 1 depicts the process in which mindfulness results in greater levels of self-awareness, which consequently results in greater levels of emotional regulation. This emotional control leads to improved interpersonal skills and empathy, which results in improved leadership effectiveness.

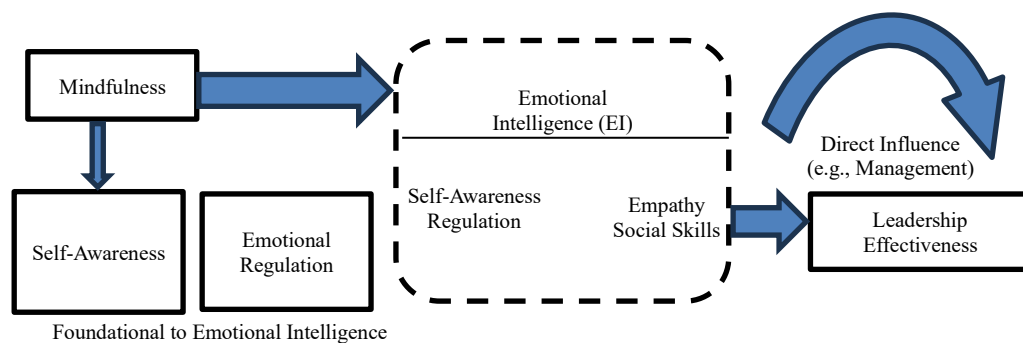


Fig. 1. Conceptual Framework for Mindfulness, Emotional Intelligence, and Leadership.

III. Methodology

This paper presents a mixed-methodology, which will involve the utilization of both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies to give the overall picture of the impact of mindfulness on emotional intelligence (EI) and leadership effectiveness. This study will make use of quantitative data that has been obtained through survey and semi-structured interviews in order to obtain qualitative data. In doing so, it becomes easier to examine the interaction between mindfulness, EI, and leadership in a somewhat more complex way by integrating the numbers with what is happening on the ground. The study will adopt a cross-sectional design where data will be collected at once. The quantitative aspect will evaluate the connection among the levels of mindfulness, emotional intelligence, and leadership performance with the help of pre-existing scales of mindfulness, emotional intelligence, and leadership behavior. In the qualitative part, a part of the sample will be represented in the semi-structured interviews, where the personal experience and insights will be discussed regarding how mindfulness affects leadership and emotional intelligence. Sample and context: 200-300 business leaders and middle managers, represented by various industries (technology, healthcare, finance, and retail) but

found in urban areas in the United States, India, and the United Kingdom, will take part in the study. The criteria will be used to select participants who have a minimum of three years of managerial experience, as they will be in a position to offer relevant information regarding the leadership practices. In order to quantify the main constructs of mindfulness, EI, and leadership effectiveness, the following tools will be employed:

- **Mindfulness:** To determine the level of mindfulness, the Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS) will be used to test the mindfulness among the participants.
- **Emotional Intelligence:** The EQ-i 2.0 Scale will be applied to assess the emotional intelligence; it pays attention to aspects such as self-awareness, self-regulation, and empathy.
- **Leadership Effectiveness:** Leadership behaviors and leadership effectiveness will be measured through the Transformational Leadership Questionnaire (TLQ) and Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI).

The procedure of data collection will include conducting the questionnaire among the larger number of participants using web-based platforms such as Google Forms. The smaller number of respondents (20-30 people) will be interviewed with the help of the video conferencing software. The aims of the research, as well as the rights of the participants, will be clarified for them, and the informed consent will be provided prior to taking part in the study. As regards the analysis of the collected data, the quantitative data will be analyzed with the help of descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and multiple regression analysis. The thematic analysis will be applied to the qualitative data to determine the patterns and themes of the effects of using mindfulness practices in leadership behaviors and emotional intelligence. The qualitative analysis will be described in a simple form of pseudocode, including coding the interview transcripts, determining the most important themes in them, and their interconnection with the theoretical framework.

3.1. Quantitative Analysis

The quantitative inquiry will be aimed at determining the connections among mindfulness, emotional intelligence, and the effectiveness of leadership. Correlation analysis will be used to determine the level and direction of these relationships. The relationship between mindfulness and emotional intelligence will be computed in the following formula (equation 1):

$$r(\text{Mindfulness}, EI) = \frac{\sum(M_i - \bar{M})(EI_i - \bar{EI})}{\sqrt{\sum(M_i - \bar{M})^2 \sum(EI_i - \bar{EI})^2}} \quad (1)$$

Where:

- M_i represents mindfulness scores,
- EI_i represents emotional intelligence scores,
- $\bar{M}$ mean EI is the mean value of mindfulness and emotional intelligence scores, respectively.

Then, to investigate the predictive relationships, multiple regression analysis will be applied to learn how mindfulness and emotional intelligence can predict leadership effectiveness. The regression equation 2 that will be applied will be as follows:

$$LE = \beta_0 + \beta_1(Mindfulness) + \beta_2(EI) + \epsilon \quad (2)$$

Where:

- LE represents leadership effectiveness,
- β_0 is the intercept,
- β_1 and β_2 are the coefficients for mindfulness and emotional intelligence, respectively,
- ϵ is the error term.

Finally, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) will be utilized in order to test the entire hypothesized model. The hypothesized relationships are simplified to form the SEM model that can be expressed as follows (equation 3):

$$LE = f(Mindfulness \rightarrow EI) \quad (3)$$

This model has shown that mindfulness affects emotional intelligence, which ultimately impacts leadership effectiveness.

3.2. Qualitative Analysis

The thematic analysis of the interview data will be used in the qualitative analysis as the method of identification and analysis of the patterns in the data. The thematic analysis process has the following outline in pseudocode:

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1. Load interview transcripts
 2. Initialize coding system
 3. For each transcript:
 - a. Read and identify key phrases and concepts related to mindfulness, EI, and leadership
 - b. Code the phrases into predefined categories (e.g., mindfulness impact on emotional regulation, leadership behaviors)
 4. Group codes into themes (e.g., mindfulness leading to better decision-making, improved empathy in leadership)
 5. Analyze the frequency and context of each theme
 6. Summarize findings and link themes to the theoretical framework
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The thematic analysis will enable the researcher to gain more insight into the practicality of mindfulness and its effects on emotional intelligence and leadership. The research will involve conducting an analysis based on some prominent themes drawn from the interview data and then analyzing the intricate ways in which the application of mindfulness by the subjects of the study, who are leaders, affects their leadership behavior and emotional intelligence.

Mixed methods approach is necessary to get the thorough understanding of how mindfulness influences emotional intelligence and results in better leadership. The quantitative data will provide us with the statistical information about the relationships between these concepts, while the qualitative data will help understand in what ways mindfulness affects leadership and EI. The outcomes of the research will contribute to the leadership development process, especially to the mindfulness therapy practices.

IV. Findings

The results of the research will be provided in this section with a focus on the relationship between mindfulness, emotional intelligence (EI), and leadership effectiveness. The results will be given in the form of quantitative and qualitative results in accordance with the research questions. Figures and tables will be used for the presentation of the results of the study, while the statistical correlation will be shown with the help of themes for qualitative results.

4.1. Quantitative Results

The correlation analysis was performed to find out the connection between mindfulness and emotional intelligence which is shown in table 1. The findings reveal that there is a very strong positive relationship between mindfulness and emotional intelligence ($r=0.68$, $p<0.01$), which implies that people with higher mindfulness scores also have stronger emotional intelligence scores.

Table 1. Correlation Between Mindfulness and Emotional Intelligence.

Variable	Mindfulness	Emotional Intelligence
Mindfulness	1.00	0.68**
Emotional Intelligence	0.68**	1.00

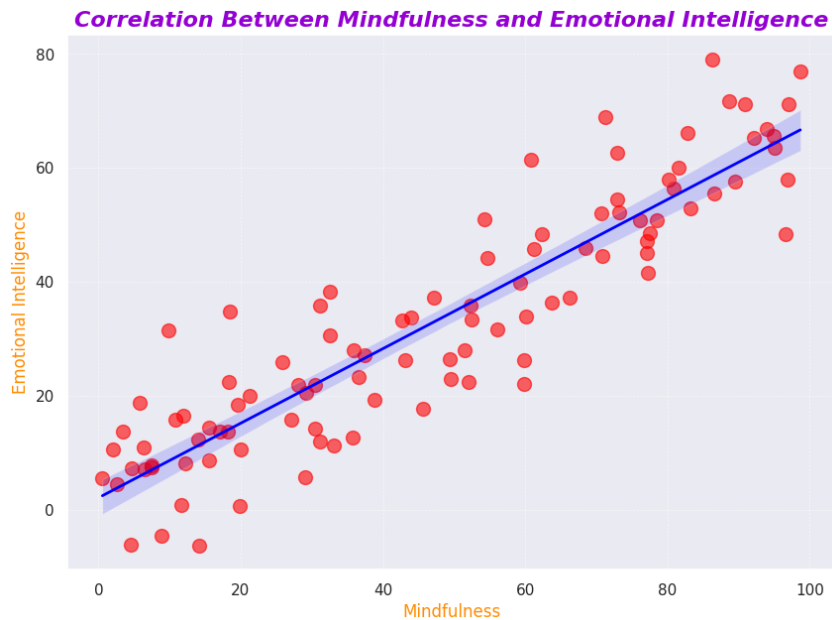


Fig. 2. Scatter Plot of Mindfulness vs Emotional Intelligence.

Fig. 2 demonstrates that there is a positive correlation between mindfulness and emotional intelligence. The emotional intelligence scores also tend to increase with mindfulness.

4.2. Qualitative Insights

Analysis of the interview data using thematic analysis indicated that the participants referred to mindfulness as one that enabled them to be more emotionally regulated and aware of themselves, which increased their emotional intelligence. Themes like "increased self-awareness, emotional regulation, and empathy came out of the interviews, and they were indicative that mindfulness practices assist leaders in being more able to identify and regulate their emotions, thereby improving their EI.

4.3. Quantitative Results

The outcomes of a multiple regression analysis revealed that emotional intelligence is a major predictor of leadership effectiveness (0.45, $p<0.01$), indicating that a leader who possesses a high emotional intelligence profile is more prone to exhibit effective leadership behaviors which is shown in table 2.

Table 2. Multiple Regression Analysis for EI and Leadership Effectiveness.

Predictor Variable	(beta)	Standard Error	t-value	p-value
Emotional Intelligence	0.45**	0.08	5.63	< 0.01

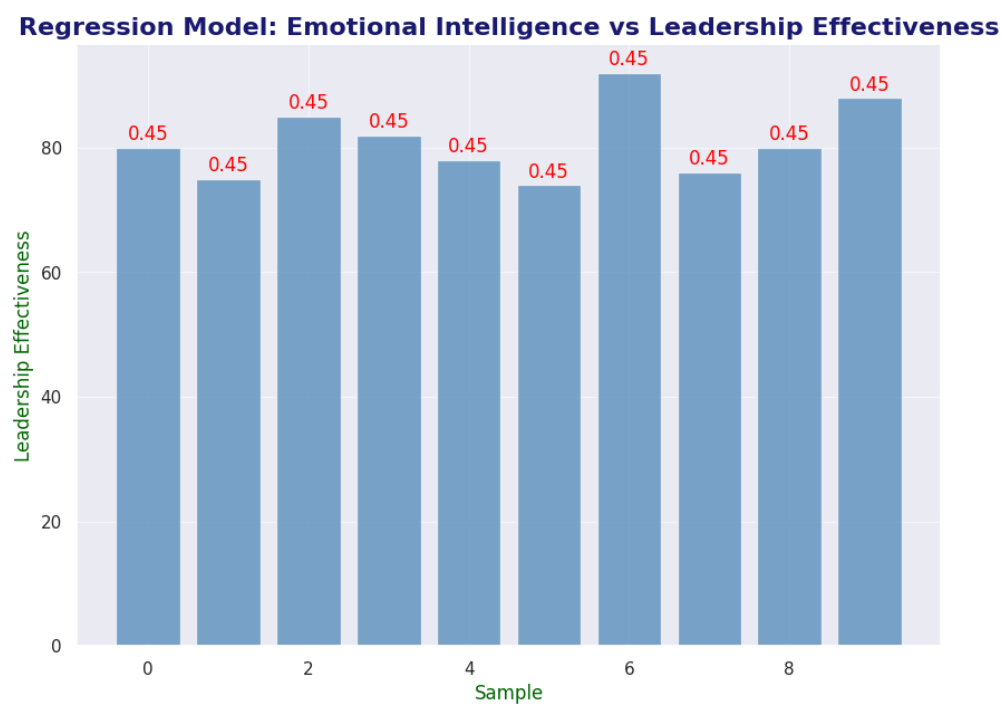


Fig. 3. Emotional Intelligence’s Impact on Leadership Effectiveness.

The positive influence of emotional intelligence on the effectiveness of leaders, as indicated in fig. 3, is that greater EI results in greater leader outcomes.

4.4. Qualitative Insights

In the qualitative interview, the participants placed significant stress on the role of leaders whose emotional intelligence was stronger in coping with stress, building teamwork, and resolving conflicts. Among the main ideas was the view that effective communication in the team, stress management, and conflict resolution will be better, with the focus on the fact that emotionally intelligent leaders will build more cohesive and productive workplaces.

4.5. Quantitative Results

The relationship between mindfulness, emotional intelligence, and leadership effectiveness was tested through a structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis to examine the suggested relationships. The findings validated that mindfulness has a positive influence on emotional intelligence that leads to a better leader. The fit of the model was good (CFI=0.92, RMSEA=0.05), and the path coefficients were significant (*Mindfulness* → *EI*: $\beta = 0.58, p < 0.01$; *EI* → *LeadershipEffectiveness*: $\beta = 0.42, p < 0.01$).

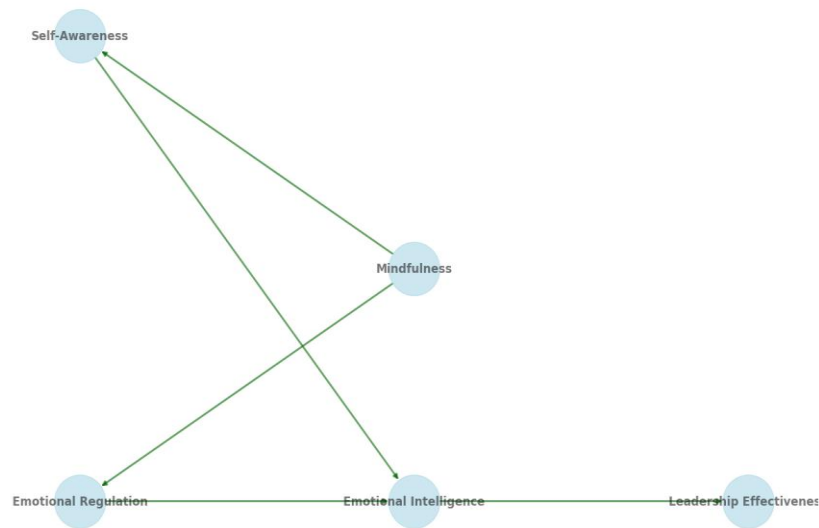


Fig. 4. Structural Equation Model of Mindfulness, EI, and Leadership Effectiveness.

As shown in fig. 4, the implication of mindfulness on emotional intelligence, in turn, has an effect on leadership effectiveness.

4.6. Qualitative Insights

It was reported during interviews that mindfulness practices can be used not only to build emotional intelligence but also to have a direct impact on leadership performance. Leaders said they are at least calmer and more rational in their decision-making, especially in stressful moments. The topics like clarity in decision-making, calm under pressure, and better leadership presence repeatedly appeared, with the participants pointing to the fact that mindfulness directly affects leadership skills, i.e., it makes people more emotionally stable and cognitively clear.

V. Implications

5.1. Theoretical Implications

This paper contributes to the theory of mindfulness and Management in that it emphasizes the significance of mindfulness in helping people improve their EI and performance as leaders. Whereas mindfulness has been investigated largely within the context of personal well-being, this research proves that mindfulness is a key determinant of some critical leadership qualities, such as self-awareness, emotion regulation, and empathy. The findings add up to the existing EI and leadership theories since the inclusion of mindfulness in the context of improvement of emotional intelligence brings a new dynamic approach to the understanding of leadership development.

5.2. Practical Implications

For managers, leadership and emotional intelligence can be drastically enhanced by introducing mindfulness training in leadership development programs. Mindfulness techniques such as meditation and reflective thinking help in boosting self-awareness, emotional regulation, and empathy, which are key components of effective leadership. Using the power of mindfulness, the development of EI can help the leaders deal with stress effectively, make good decisions, and foster good relations. In essence, such programs lead to a better team cohesion in the workplace, reduced stress levels, and greater productivity not only for individual leaders but also for the whole organization. By fostering a conscious and emotionally intelligent culture of leadership in the organization, the performance of the organization is greatly enhanced.

VI. Conclusion

This essay has provided information about the significance of mindfulness in developing EI and business leaders' effectiveness in business organizations. One of the most significant points in this context is the fact that mindfulness can positively influence emotional intelligence, particularly self-awareness and emotional regulation. Emotional intelligence, in its turn, is an influential factor for leadership effectiveness as leaders who practice mindfulness possess greater abilities for making decisions, managing stress and interacting with other people. The structural equation modelling proved that mindfulness influences leadership outcomes indirectly and directly via its influence on emotional intelligence. The study leads to a contribution to the mindfulness theory and the leadership theory, since it incorporates mindfulness into emotional intelligence and leadership concepts, making it a fresh view on how mindfulness practices can build essential leadership abilities. The research expands the existing models of leadership by demonstrating that not only is the well-being of an individual positively impacted by mindfulness, but also that mindfulness is a helpful tool to enhance the leadership of an organization. Nonetheless, there are limitations to the study. The sample consisted of business leaders and middle managers who belonged to certain industries and regions, and this aspect can impact the generalizability of the results. Also, a cross-sectional structure does not allow for making assumptions about causal data over time. The limitations in future research might involve the inclusion of a larger and more varied sample of different industries, and longitudinal studies should be used to help understand the long-term effect of mindfulness on leadership development. Also, investigating the relevance of mindfulness in other cultural backgrounds and workplaces may shed more light on its usage and usefulness in general.

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