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# 24 years of being mindful in organisations of 21st century: A Bibliometric and Scoping Review of Mindfulness at Workplace

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## Abstract

This study investigates the role of mindfulness as a tool to manage workplace challenges, particularly addressing employee isolation and promoting well-being. To achieve this, research papers published over the last 24 years in highly influential journals listed in the ABDC Journal list were extracted and analyzed. A Structured Literature Review (SLR) combined with bibliometric analysis was conducted on the selected studies to explore the impact of mindfulness practices in the workplace. The analysis identified leading ABDC-listed journals across business, social science, and psychology domains that have contributed significantly to mindfulness research. The findings revealed an emerging pattern of increased research interest in mindfulness at the workplace in recent years, highlighting its growing relevance in modern organizational settings. Additionally, the study identified key future research agendas, providing directions for advancing the field. The results underscore that mindfulness training can play a critical role in helping employees manage workplace isolation, enhance their mental and emotional well-being, and address challenges associated with contemporary work environments. In conclusion, this research emphasizes the value of mindfulness practices as a practical and effective intervention to foster employee well-being, improve workplace dynamics, and mitigate isolation, thereby contributing to healthier and more resilient organizations.

**KEYWORDS :** Mindfulness, Workplace, Isolation, Bibliometric Analysis, Systematic Literature Review

## 1. Introduction

COVID-19 has struck billions of individuals and drastically affected global economies. Various Reports and data by Industries imply “service mega-disruptions” due to COVID-19 leading to negative consequences for the employees. (Kabadayi et al., 2020). Because of the delay in production and the limited availability of the COVID-19 vaccine for all citizens, governments

worldwide have maintained various social distancing measures to stop spreading the infectious virus. (Tuzovic & Kabadayi, 2018). However, social distancing is against the essential human character to socialise or link with others—such Isolation results in loneliness among people. (Bavel et al., 2020). There are regular efforts to protect people against mental health issues related to the job in the discussed context. The current study has been conducted to conceptualise a framework to deal with Isolation using mindfulness techniques.

Although Isolation has been identified to affect employees' well-being adversely, there is a gap in finding the solution that becomes the need for the hour to be solved; thus, the study attempt to bridge the gap (Khurana & Rangnekar, 2024). Mindfulness training is identified to inverse the adverse effect on well-being caused by Isolation Earlier, the Impact of social Distancing as a control measure for the contagious disease has been studied through research on economic perspectives only (Maharaj & Kleczkowski, 2012). A few studies have steered recently to study the impact of social Isolation on employees' well-being. (Tuzovic & Kabadayi, 2018). It has also been observed that Mindfulness-Based Interventions have a positive association with many facets of well-being, such as subjective well-being, spiritual experience, job satisfaction and professional quality of life (Lomas et al., 2017). However, no meaningful work has contributed to solving the Isolation problem in the new workplace settings of either social distancing at work or the practices of Work from Home (WFH). Therefore, the current review is focused on Mindfulness interventions to deal with Isolation's problems as among the programs to maintain well-being, Mindfulness through meditation or interventions is most effective (Lomas et al., 2017). Moreover, training initiatives relating to Mindfulness have found to reduce loneliness (Tu & Zhang, 2015). Thus the following research questions are addressed in the study:

1. How can the problem of Isolation be managed in the new workplace setting?
2. What is the pattern of publications relating to Mindfulness in High-influence journals?
3. Can Mindfulness Training be used in dealing with Isolation?

### 1.1 Mindfulness

"Mindfulness is awareness of and receptive attention to present events and experience." (Good et al., 2016). As per Langer's Mindfulness Theory, Mindfulness enables change in individuals and institutions by either (a) increasing Mindfulness or by (b) decreasing mindlessness. Mindfulness can be increased by implementing new procedures and programs that may arouse awareness of multiple perspectives. This method is direct, whereas another indirect way is to reduce mindlessness. It may be implemented by eliminating those aspects in the existing programs and procedures that unintentionally promote mindlessness (Langer & Moldoveanu, 2000). "Mindlessness sets in when we depend too strictly on perceptions and classifications created in the past, limiting our control to make an intelligent selection in the present."

In a quick view, Mindfulness can be explained as attending one's experiences with openness and

awareness of the instant moment. (Creswell, 2017). Mindfulness originated from old Buddhist customs and was mentioned in Buddhist texts way before the emergence of western sciences. (Baer, 2011) Classical Buddhist theories of Mindfulness focus attention with a clear mind to and consciousness of whatever is being perceived by people in the current moment (Dhaka et al., 2024). In Recent Times, Mindfulness has gained significant importance in the Organisational context. Organisations are increasingly preferring meditation and Mindfulness-based Training programs in their new emerging Workplace Settings (Sajjad & Shahbaz, 2020). In Organisational Context, Mindfulness suggests two major possible solutions. Firstly, an employee may vary the perspective to view the workplace. Secondly, interventions may be designed to allow the employees to engage in the responsibilities they execute (Gajda & Zbierowski, 2023; Langer & Moldoveanu, 2000)

1.2 Isolation

Isolation can be described as a deficiency of social interactions. Social distancing has significantly pressurised the well-being of employees in the COVID Era. (Henkel et al., 2020) Furthermore, Work-From-Home (WFH) system in the new scenario has emerged new challenges to organisations. Among those challenges, the most crucial one is workplace isolation. (Mulki & Jaramillo, 2011). Professional Isolation can be described as a state where one employee is out of touch with other co-employees at the workplace. Sometimes feel the same while being connected physically (Diekema, 1992). Because of Isolation, an inherent need and wish to feel linked at a person's workplace is usually displeased (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). It leads to concentration in belongingness and additional frustration among employees. They typically feel a smaller amount of organisational commitment and ownership in such situations (Duffy et al., 2002). Indeed, extensive Isolation is more likely to upsurge dissatisfaction and job burnout (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). In Addition to it, isolated employees may also experience regularly increased anxiety and, in life-threatening cases, weakened mental health or sometimes bodily healthiness (DeWall & Baumeister, 2006). However, organisations are starting to consider Isolation's damaging influence on employee performance. Many organisations and researchers are discovering ways to deal with isolation problems (Mulki & Jaramillo, 2011).

1.3 Integrative Framework for the Role of Mindfulness in dealing with Isolation

Many Research Studies have concluded that employees do not want to be alone, lonely, or isolated (Masi et al., 2011). Global social distancing measures through COVID-19 Pandemic have increased the "loneliness virus", creating a rise in Loneliness and Isolation (Odekerken-Schröder et al., 2020), making physical distancing to be the new normal. Social distancing can be of different criteria with diverse impacts for several stakeholders (like voluntary or mandatory self-quarantine and shelter-in-place orders, workplace closures, shifts to work from Home, service at a distance and cancellations of public mass gatherings such as sporting and cultural events). Social distancing in the COVID pandemic has affected a noticeably large share of people with lethal effects on their well-

being (Henkel et al., 2020). Thus need of the hour for organisations become to manage employees well-being (Khurana et al., 2024).

A combined body of knowledge in the Social Science and organisational spheres suggests that Mindfulness can significantly affect employee well-being (Good et al., 2016). It includes positive association with improved mental health, wholesome associations with others, fulfilment, and self-regulation. (Jordan et al., 2014). Therefore as presented in Figure 1, Mindfulness Training can be introduced as an intervention in isolation phases to change the adverse effect isolation has on well-being to a positive impact (Khurana & Rangnekar, 2023). Thus, Mindful employees would have a well-being state (Zeshan et al., 2023). Isolation, which adversely affects the well-being of employees, can thus be positively reduced by implementing mindfulness training or interventions in the organisation (Choi et al., 2022).

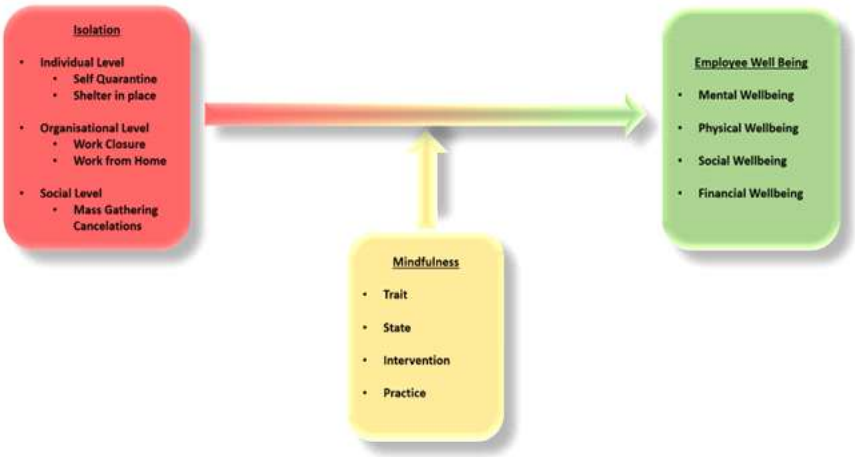



**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**

## 2. Research Methodology

2.1 Objectives

1. To develop an overarching framework to manage Isolation with the help of Mindfulness to attain well being
2. To represent the emerging pattern of publications for Mindfulness
3. To analyse the significant constructs associated with Mindfulness
4. To look for research themes relating to Mindfulness that scholars can use to get new insights in future

## 2.2 Research Methodology

An Extensive Literature review was performed to meet the objectives of the study. To know the pattern of publications in Mindfulness at the workplace, the Scopus Database was used to retrieve literature works. The initial query was (TITLE-ABS-KEY (“Mindfulness”) AND TITLE-ABS-KEY ("Business" OR “Employee” OR “Workplace” OR “Organisation” OR “Organization”) ), which resulted in 3,641 research work in all study domains.

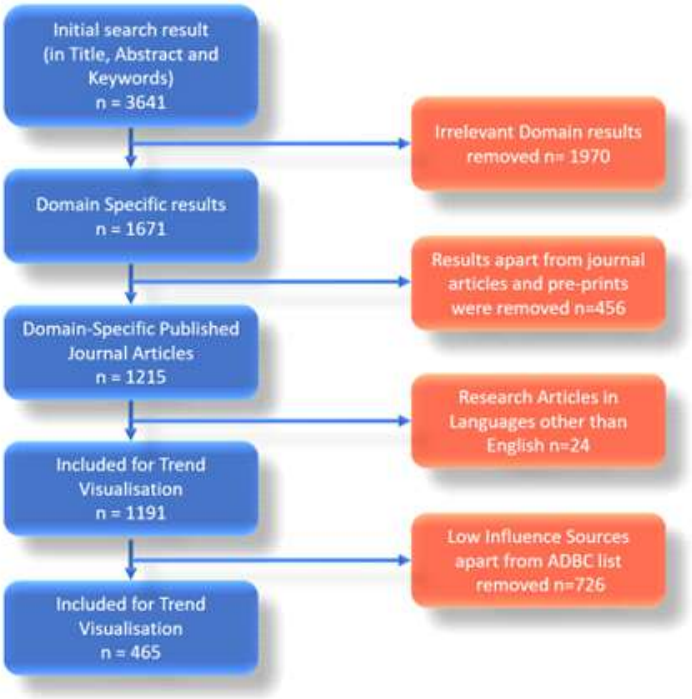



**Figure 2 Search Filtering Flow Diagram**

## 2.3 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

As presented in Figure 2, the initial search result was filtered according to various levels of criteria. The search results were firstly limited to ‘Business, Management and Accounting’, ‘Social Science’, ‘Arts and Humanities’, ‘Economics, Econometrics and Finance’ and ‘Psychology’ domains, resulting in 1,674 documents. These domains were selected to filter publications linked closely to human behaviour either as individuals, members of the social group, or the organisation’s employee.

After Filtering out the relative domains, the results were filtered out for only those papers which have been published in research journals, resulting in 1215 Papers. This filtering was done to remove the publications in book chapters, conference papers and those which are in pre-print phases. Further 24 research papers in other languages than English were also removed

All 1191 papers were sorted source title wise and were then filtered for research papers, which have been published in journals of ABDC (Australian Business Dean Council) list 2022. Filtering was done by matching the results with the ABDC list using Excel Power Query-filtering, which filtered 465 documents related to Mindfulness published in 66 A* category, 189 A category, 106 B category and 104 C category Journals as also given in Figure 3. The filtering was done to obtain those publications which are published only in highly influential journals

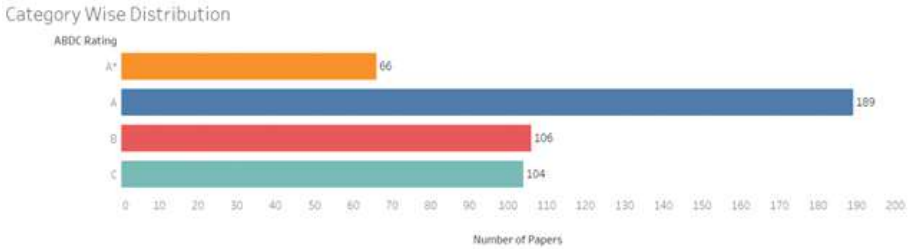



Figure 3 ABDC Rating-wise Distribution

All the 465 documents were within the 24-year limit from 2000 to 2024, which was checked to ensure that all publications done in ABDC journals during the 21st Century can be included in the study. These research papers were then used to visualize the publication trend while framing the concept and depicting the emerging literature pattern relating to Mindfulness.

### 2.4 Visual Representation of the Data

Data were visualised using Tableau software and CiteSpace 5.7.R3 through the methods provided in (Chen & Song, 2019). Different Parameters (mentioned in Discussion) were identified according to which visualisations were observed and reported.

## 3 Analysis and Results

### 3.1 Year-wise Distribution

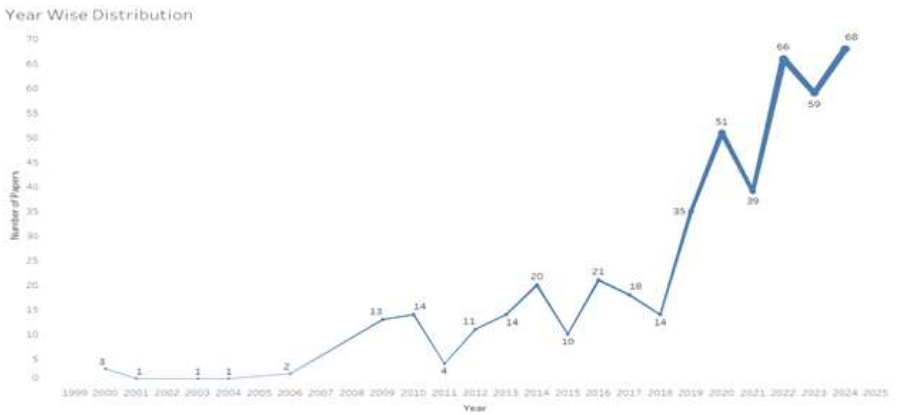



Figure 4 Year-wise Distributions of Mindfulness Papers

Figure 4 demonstrates the year-wise Distribution of the articles published relating to Mindfulness in various journals. It is evident from the representation that Mindfulness research is emerging year by year. Even with a few fluctuations, there is no significant point to depict a decreasing pattern in publications. The average publication per year in ABDC listed Journals from 2000 to 2024 was about 18.5 Research Papers. The possible reasons for this pattern have been discussed in the discussion part.

### 3.2 Journal–wise Distribution

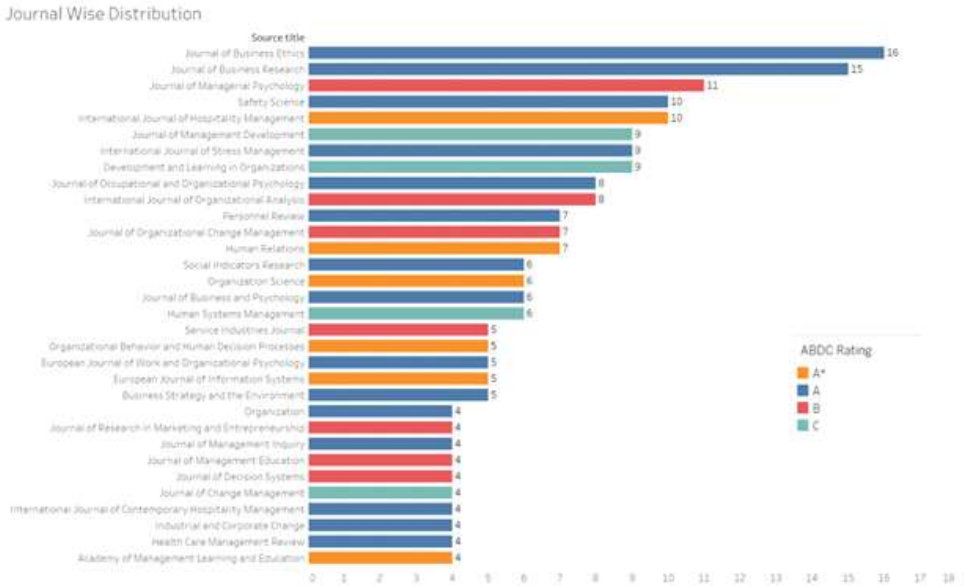



Figure 5 Journal Wise Distribution of Mindfulness Papers

Figure 5 represents the Papers included in this study, according to the journals they were published in. Thus, this figure helps identify those influential journals that focus on Mindfulness research. The Journal of Business Ethics leads with the highest number of publications (16 papers), followed by the Journal of Business Research (15 papers), both of the journals fall under A category, indicating a strong focus on mindfulness within these high-impact journals. Other notable journals with a substantial number of mindfulness publications include the Journal of Managerial Psychology with 11 papers, the Safety Science journal and International Journal of Hospitality Management, each with 10 papers, and the Journal of Management Development, International Journal of Stress Management, and Development and Learning in Organizations, each with 9 papers.

### 3.1 Category-Wise Yearly Distribution

Figure 6 represent the year-wise Distribution of Mindfulness Papers in ABDC listed journals divided as per their category separately—A*, A, B, and C. A journals* (orange line), the most prestigious category, show a modest but steady pattern of publications over the years, with significant spikes in 2021 with 12 papers, and again in 2023 with 10, indicating a growing acceptance of mindfulness research in high-impact journals. This trend suggests that mindfulness is gaining traction as an important topic in top-tier academic discussions.

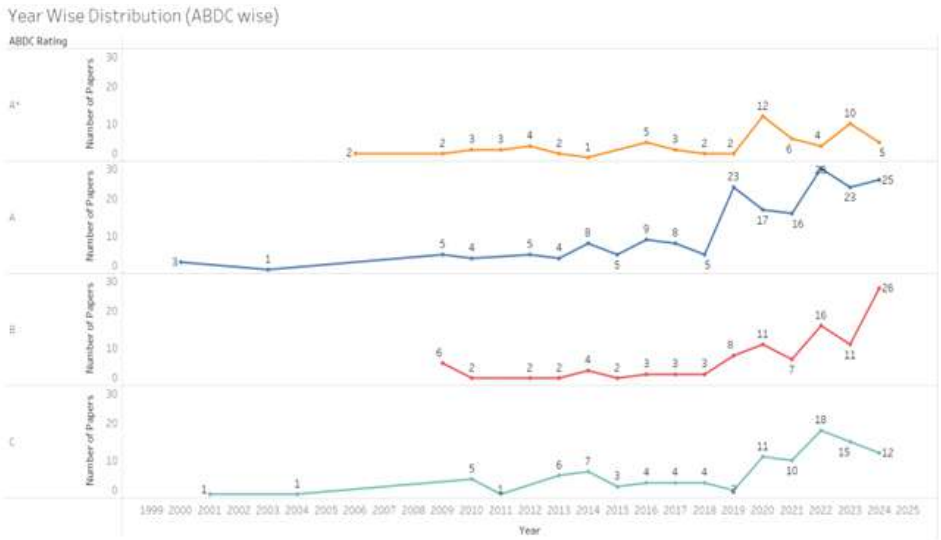



Figure 6 Year-wise Distributions of Mindfulness Papers (Category wise)

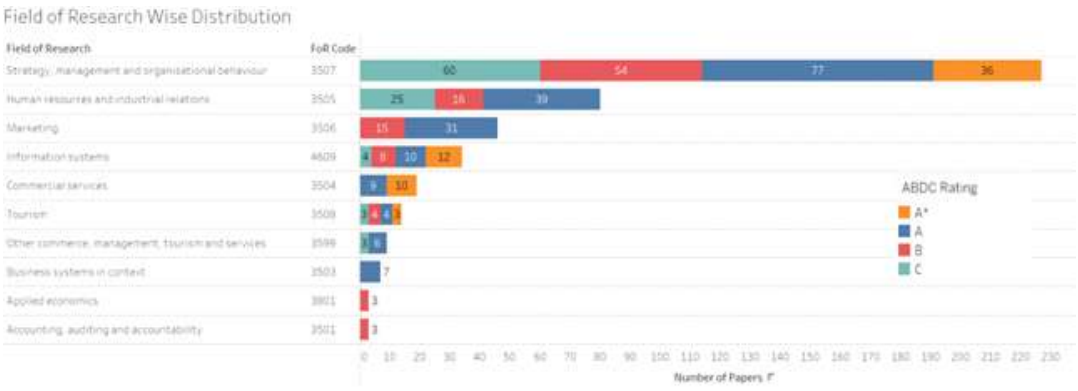



**Figure 7 Field of Research-wise Distributions of Mindfulness Papers**

Figure 7 represents the Field of research wise distribution of mindfulness papers. The highest concentration of mindfulness research appears in the Strategy, Management, and Organizational Behaviour field (FoR code 3507), with substantial contributions across all ABDC categories, particularly in A and B-rated journals. This field has 60 papers in C-rated journals, 77 in A-rated journals, 54 in B-rated journals, and 36 in A* journals, demonstrating its importance as a central focus of mindfulness studies. Other significant areas include Human Resources and Industrial Relations (FoR code 3505) and Marketing (FoR code 3506). Fields like Information Systems and Commercial Services display a more moderate presence in mindfulness research, while areas such as Tourism and Accounting, Auditing, and Accountability have relatively low engagement, as seen in the limited number of publications. This distribution indicates that mindfulness research predominantly aligns with HR and OB-oriented issues, reflecting its relevance in enhancing workplace dynamics, employee well-being, and HR practices.

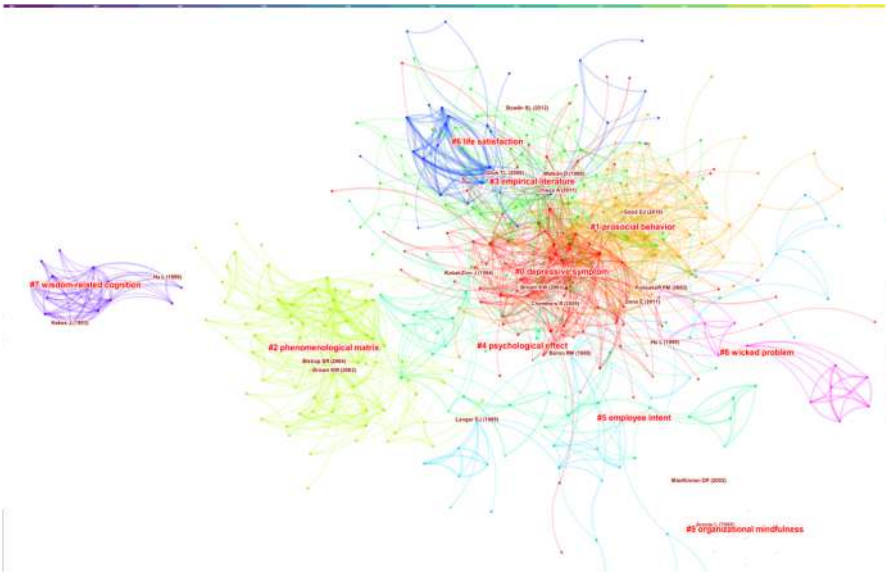



Figure 8 Cluster wise Distribution of Mindfulness Papers

### 3.4 Cluster-Wise Distribution

Figure 8 represents the cluster-wise Distribution of Papers of Mindfulness. Ten clusters were identified in the 465 papers, namely depressive symptom, prosocial behaviour, phenomenological matrix (, empirical literature, psychological effect, employee intent, life satisfaction, wisdom-related cognition, wicked problem and organisational Mindfulness.

### 3.4 Discussion

The study adds to the prevailing literature by elaborating on mindfulness training in dealing with Isolation's problems. The research indicates that Mindfulness training can significantly improve the depleting well-being among people, especially among employees in the Isolated times of the COVID-19 Pandemic "(Mekawy et al., 2022). Even when the Pandemic would be over, the Isolation's Problem would be there for a long time. If not appropriately dealt with, it is implied from the study that Isolation could have a drastic impact on employees' psychological health and physical health. Thus, Organisations have to provide Mindfulness Training to their employees to maintain a healthy and efficient workforce.

The importance of mindfulness training can be easily interpreted from Figure 4, which shows the Year-wise Distributions of Mindfulness Papers. Figure 4 shows a gradual rise in publications of Mindfulness till the year 2016. The main reason for the same can be the trend that emerged in the corporates to do the mindfulness training. The rise is evident from the report published by (Wolever et al., 2018) that in 2016 nearly Twenty-two per cent of 500 Fortune companies did implement organisational initiatives for Mindfulness with an overall valuation of those training in Millions of Dollars. In 2018, many economies were facing regression. Many organisations were focusing more on cost-cutting and less on training the employees. As a result, Figure 4 showed a drop-down in 2018. From 2019 onwards, the pattern has depicted a boom, which was evident with the increasing focus on mindfulness training in the last two years.

The study shows ABDC listed journals' publications relating to Mindfulness in Figure 5 and Figure 6. As discussed in the results, the pattern is an upward movement. The Upward movement is evident from the fact that more and more organisations focus on Mindfulness and its Training. The study also reveals that most publications were in the “Journal of Business Ethics”. Thus, researchers working on Mindfulness may focus on such journals as given in Figure 5 in future for publication on the construct. The field of study results show that most of the work on Mindfulness at the workplace is related with the use of mindfulness techniques by employees of organisations for their well-being.

The cluster analysis of the existing Literature in Figure 8 has been done in the study. The densest cluster (shown in red colour) focuses on depression symptoms, reflecting that most cited work relates to Depression. The reason for depression symptoms being the highest cited cluster among 465 papers is that most Mindfulness publications have been linked to removing mindlessness rather than increasing Mindfulness.

The second densest cluster is focused on prosocial behaviour (shown in orange). It implies the beneficial aspects of Mindfulness, reflecting that having a mindful approach elevates an individual's prosocial behaviour.

Another Significant cluster focused on the phenomenological matrix (shown in light green colour). This matrix reflects a multidisciplinary use of Mindfulness in the medical domain, specifically neurology and the psychology domain. Research in this cluster has its main focus upon solving mental health problems using Mindfulness Approaches.

The Least dense cluster displays "Organisational Mindfulness", reflecting that a good research scope is present in an organisational context related to Mindfulness training. Researchers can shift their approach and explore more about Mindfulness in the Workplace setting so that the construct could specifically be studied regarding employees.

## 4 Research Themes and Agenda

The study offers two broad research themes that future research may address based on the conceptual framework and literature review. The first theme can be of a Brief period orientation and covers implementing mindfulness training during the Pandemic. This theme is more likely to be viewed as a reactive measure to deal with Isolation

The second theme can be of an Extended Period orientation and covers preparing the employees for any such circumstances. Isolation will have its most negligible impact on the employees and pass through the hurdles with Mindfulness. In both Approaches to Mindfulness training, researchers would require to provide empirical support to the theories to prove the importance of Mindfulness in times of Isolation to the organisations.

## 5 Objective Accomplishment

The study's main objective was to frame a conceptual framework accomplished in Figure1, presenting the role of Mindfulness among the relationship of Isolation and employees' well-being. The existing literature supports the concept discussed in the Integrative Framework for the Role of Mindfulness in coping Isolation. Thus, the first objective is accomplished where Mindfulness intervention can inverse (make positive) the negative relation between Isolation and Well-Being.

Figure 3 to 7 accomplish the second objective, which was focused on showing the emerging pattern of publications relating to Mindfulness

The Third objective is accomplished by Figure 8, which signifies the association of Mindfulness with other constructs like Depression, Pro-social Behaviour, organisational Mindfulness

This paper's fourth objective is to provide insights for future research. The researchers may work on the insights provided. The role of Mindfulness in tackling Isolation can be more refined and proven with evidence using empirical methods.

## 6 Implications

From Academicians perspectives, the study lays the foundations for further empirical research on the framework purposed that can be tested. The study also implies that mindfulness theory is not

limited to any particular construct, and Various other constructs' role can also be understood between Isolation, Mindfulness and Well Being.

Based on the framework, organisations may consider implementing Mindfulness training in their organisations. With Mindfulness training in the framework, developed organisations can help their employees deal with Isolation resulting from the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Also, in the new normal, Work From Home (WFH) would emerge as the most opted choice by many organisations, and thus Social Isolation would have its impact on the employees. To avoid any such adverse effects of WFH, the organisation can opt for Mindfulness training

## 7 Limitations and Directions for the Future Research

Despite contributions to the existing literature, the research has the following limitations and directions for future research in this area.

1. Only ABDC listed journals were targeted to depict Mindfulness publications pattern. However, there are crucial papers in other categories. that could have been considered in future research.
2. Only a conceptual framework is proposed in this study. As the further scope of the study, the framework can be tested empirically
3. The study conceptualises the moderating role of Mindfulness among Isolation and well being
4. The study's scope is mainly focused on the organisational context and providing mindfulness training to the employees. However, the findings can also be modified to generalise in a psychological context. And then be used to deal with Isolation's problem faced by any individual.

## 8 Conclusion

To conclude, it can be said that Mindfulness training can be a key to solve the issues that arise due to Social Isolation. More empirical studies can justify the framework, and it can be further scope for analysis along with the research themes discussed. The Pandemic necessitates Mindfulness's implication through training intervention in the organisations aiding employees in overcoming the stressful outcome of social Isolation. It could ultimately benefit the well-being of the employees.

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