

Connecting Mindfulness and Character Strengths: Correlational and Experimental Evidence for a Mutual Support Model

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Summary: The present dissertation advances toward a more integrated view in psychological research by guiding the attention of mindfulness research to the framework of positive psychology, emphasizing its potential for increasing positive qualities. In order to achieve this goal, the current thesis (1) systematically illustrates the problem of a widely used self-report questionnaire of mindfulness with a large heterogenous sample ($N = 2,247$) to understand the construct of mindfulness better; (2) attempts to theoretically derive and empirically test (using 1 cross-sectional study and 1 intervention study) a mutual support model of mindfulness and one of the most important constructs in positive psychology – character strengths; and (3) demonstrates the efficacy of the mindfulness-only intervention (MBSR) and the newly developed mindfulness-character strengths-combined intervention (MBSP) in stress reduction and well-being, and further expands its application into the workplace setting. Overall, the present thesis suggests that mindfulness and character strengths mutually enhance one another, creating the dynamics of an upward spiral: increases in mindfulness predict enhancement in specific character strengths, while increases in specific character strengths were assumed to predict growth in mindfulness. This synergetic effect of mindfulness and character strengths were indirectly shown in the improvements of task performance for participants of the combined intervention. As combining mindfulness and character strengths leads to more job-resources as well as better person-organizational fit. Implications are discussed for future research as well as for educations, employees, and organizations.

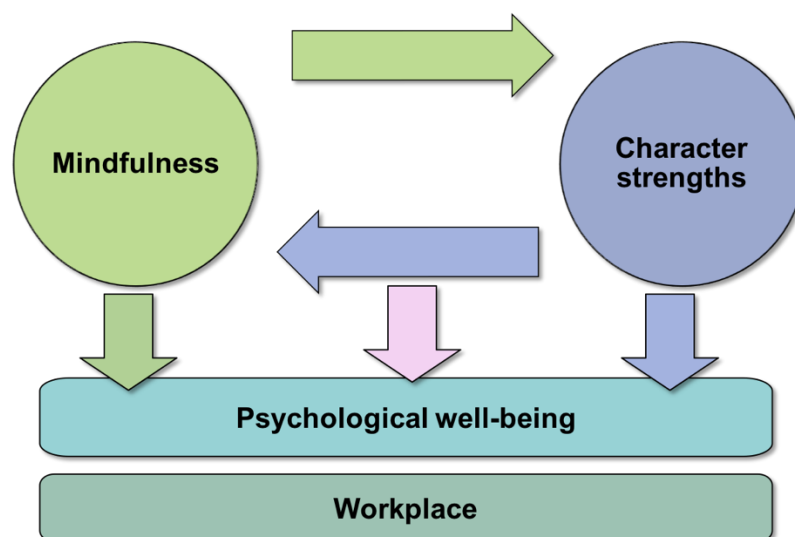


Figure 1. The big picture of the present dissertation