

*Effectiveness of Incorporating Mindfulness Programs for Corporate Executives:  
The IMC Case Study*

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**Abstract**

Mindfulness is bringing one's complete attention to the experiences occurring in the present moment, in a non-judgmental or accepting way (Brown & Ryan, 2003; Kabat-Zinn, 1990; Linehan, 1993a; Marlatt & Kristeller, 1999) and can be developed through meditation and deep breathing activities. The impact or results demonstrated through research are that it increases awareness, insight, wisdom, compassion, and equanimity (Goldstein, 2002; Kabat-Zinn, 2000). Other organisational impact include employee well-being, resilience, engagement, stress management and job satisfaction (Baer, Smith, Hopkins, Krietemeyer and Toney, 2008). This study measures the effectiveness of a Mindfulness Program, organised for 125 mid to senior executives of a global conglomerate from over 10 different nationalities, conducted over three program runs in one year. The study will show how the program impacted their long-term behaviours, lifestyle, work productivity and relationships using an experimental research design, through pre and post testing, involving physiological variables and behavioural indicators. The results and findings show that there is sustainable and positive behavioural change and long-term physical health improvements for majority of the participants as a direct result of the mindfulness program. And the implication of this study is that this same program can be implemented for other corporate executives to improve physical well-being, organisational satisfaction, performance, and work, relational and family well-being.

Keywords: Mindfulness, Well-Being, Organisational Performance, Engagement, Job Satisfaction

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## **Introduction**

The concept of mindfulness has gained increasing attention in recent years, as research has demonstrated its potential to improve various aspects of well-being, including increased awareness, insight, wisdom, compassion, and equanimity (Goldstein, 2002; Kabat-Zinn, 2000). In addition to these personal benefits, mindfulness has also been found to have positive impacts on organizational outcomes, such as employee well-being, resilience, engagement, stress management, and job satisfaction (Baer et al., 2008).

## **Objective**

This study aims to measure the effectiveness of a mindfulness program for 125 mid to senior level executives of a global conglomerate, with participants from over 10 different nationalities. The program was conducted over four runs in one year, and the study uses an experimental research design, with pre and post testing, to measure the program's impact on the executives' long-term behaviours, lifestyles, work productivity, and relationships. The study will show how the program impacted their long-term behaviours, lifestyle, work productivity and relationships using an experimental research design, through pre and post testing, involving physiological variables and behavioural indicators.

## **Methods**

The mindfulness program consisted of meditation and deep breathing activities and was designed to develop mindfulness as defined by Brown and Ryan (2003), Kabat-Zinn (1990), Linehan (1993a), and Marlatt and Kristeller (1999), as the practice of bringing one's complete attention to the experiences occurring in the present moment, in a non-judgmental or accepting way. The study used both physiological variables and behavioural indicators to measure the program's effectiveness. A total of 3 runs of the program was conducted and 125 participants took part in the Pre and Post Testing. The instruments and questions provided insights into several areas:

- General Well-Being
- Energy, Vitality and Spirit
- Sleep and rest
- Tension, Anxiety and Pressure
- Worry, Depression and Melancholy
- Happy, Optimistic and Joyful
- Curiosity, Interest and Fun
- Focus and Efficiency
- Being relaxed and at ease

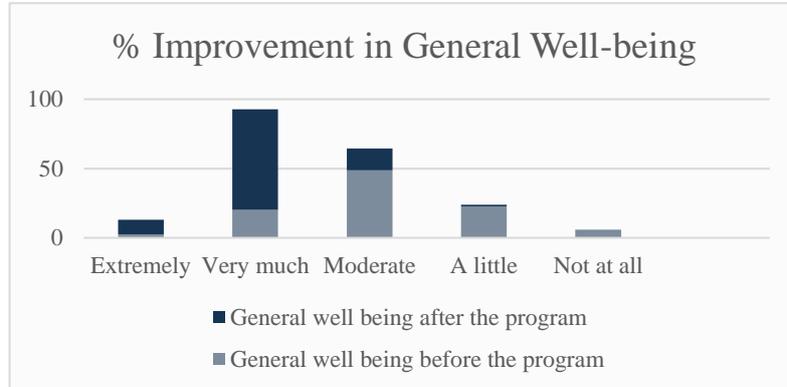
## **Results and Findings**

The data analysis from the Pre and Post surveys shows positive results in all components of physiological, physical, cognitive, and affective domains of health and well-being.

## 1. General Well-Being

Over 60% of participants reported improvement (Extremely & Very Much ratings) in General Well-being as a result of the mindfulness living program.

Figure 1



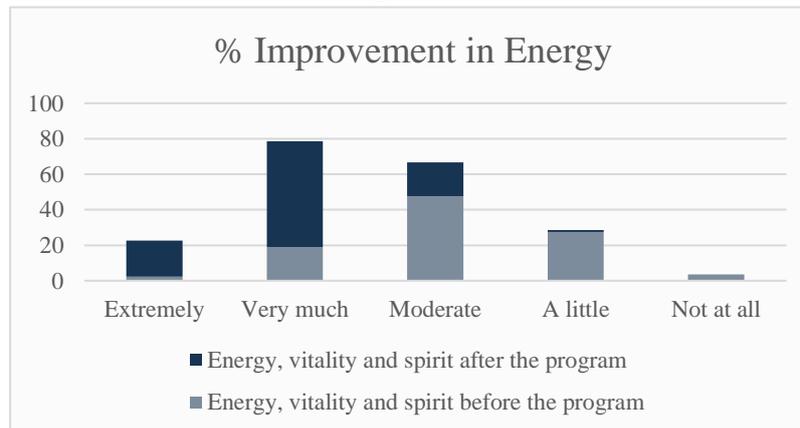
Quotes:

A15: *“Before the program I have found myself being too selfish. After the program, I find that through mindful living, it has improved not only my physical health, but also my spiritual and mental health.”*

## 2. Energy, Vitality and Spirit

Over 58% of all participants reported an improvement (Extremely & Very Much ratings) in energy levels.

Figure 2



Quotes:

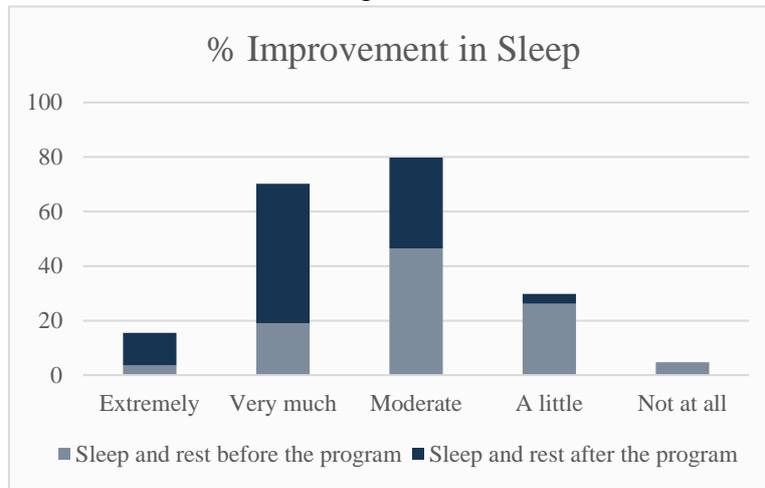
A51: *“A self that wants to incorporate more exercises in my otherwise non-active lifestyle.”*

A34: *“I have strengthened myself physically and mentally.”*

### 3. Sleep and Rest

Saw over 40% improvement (Extremely & Very Much ratings) in sleep.

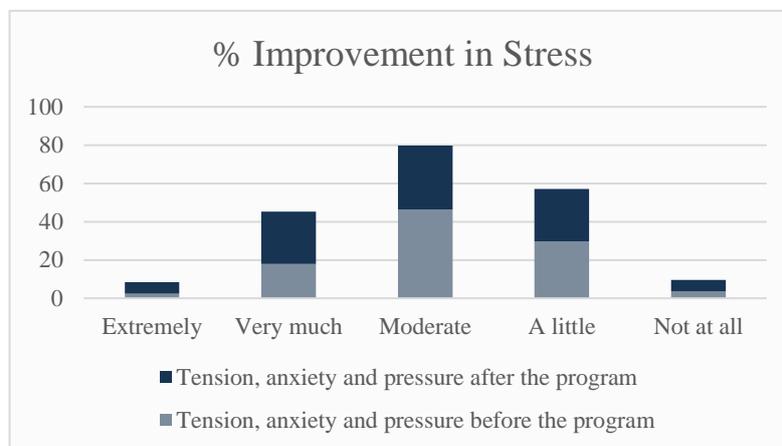
Figure 3



### 4. Tension, Anxiety and Pressure

Over 13% reported improvement (Extremely & Very Much ratings) in reduced tension and anxiety.

Figure 4



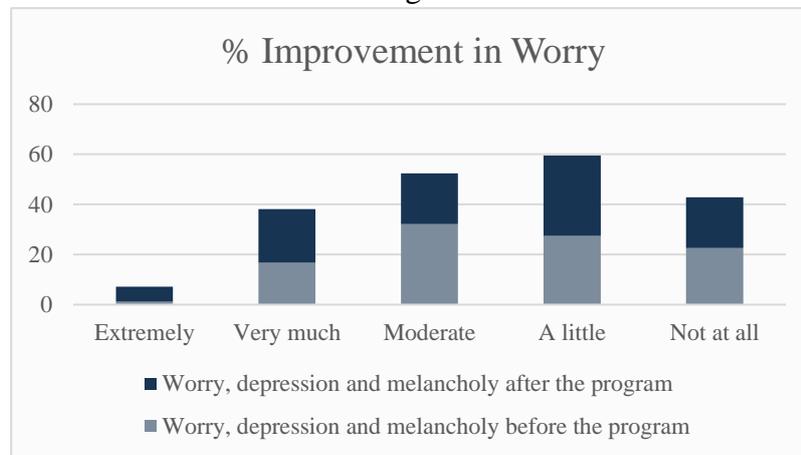
Quotes:

A22: *“I entered in a pretty stressful state and left more peaceful. I learnt how not to be judgemental on myself and to take it easy in the future. It doesn’t help constantly planning about every possible scenario since we can’t control it. I used to overthink a lot. I think I find myself 10% happier now and I have some tools and more motivation to continue the work.”*

## 5. Worry, Depression and Melancholy

Close to 10% improvement in decreased state of worry reported by participants.

Figure 5



Quote:

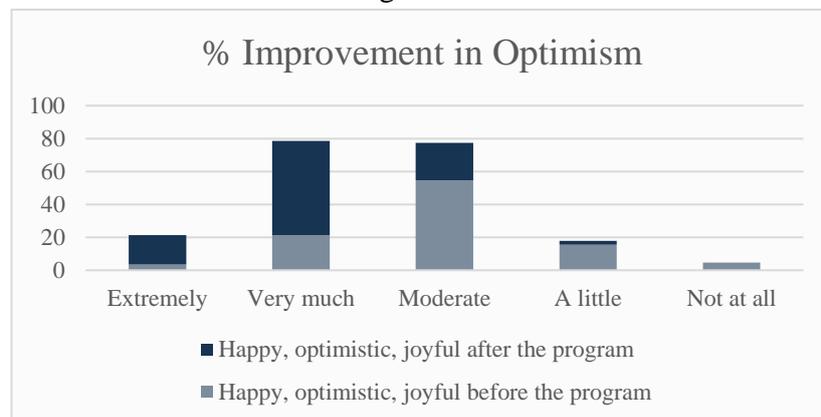
A75: *“An improved and confident person.”*

A7: *“Happy, optimistic and joyful.”*

## 6. Optimism

Over 50% of participants reported High and Extremely high levels of optimism.

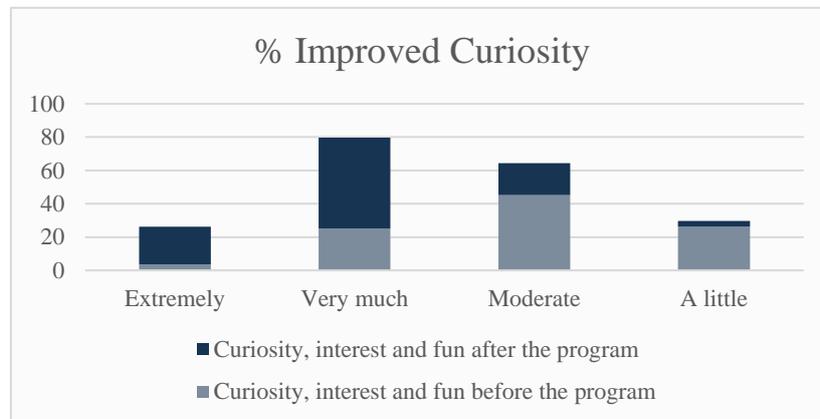
Figure 6



## 7. Curiosity, Interest and Fun

Over 48% saw an improvement in consciousness and curiosity.

Figure 7



Quotes:

A19: *“Increased self-consciousness and open mindedness.”*

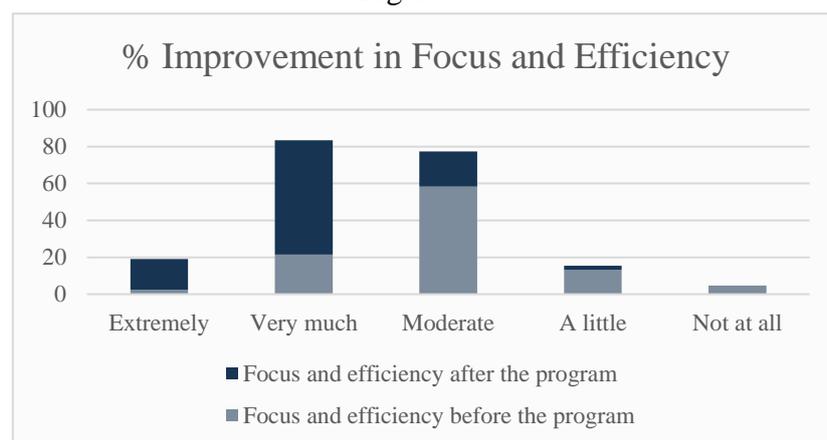
A80: *“More aware and confident of myself.”*

A38: *“Greater consciousness of inner self, resilience in facing and managing pain, release of unconscious residual emotions.”*

## 8. Focus and Efficiency

Second highest improvement figures were for areas linked to productivity, with reported levels of improvement of over 54% for levels of focus and efficiency.

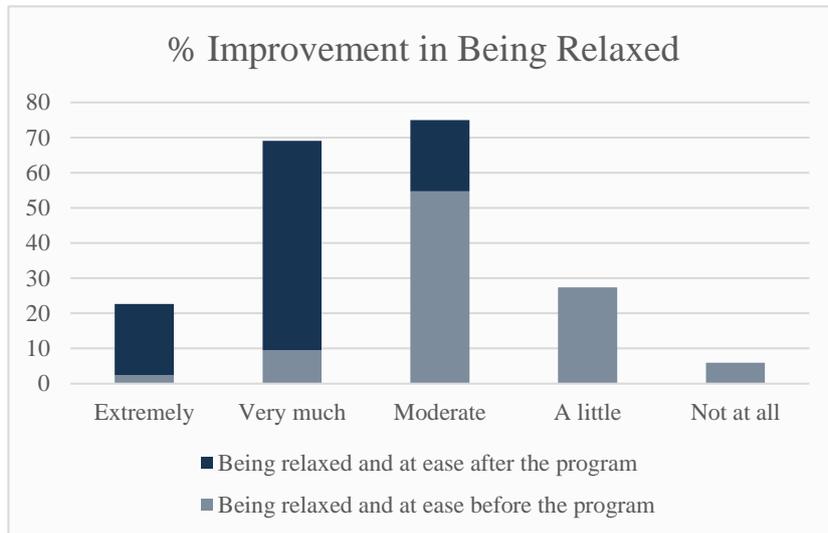
Figure 8



## 9. Being Relaxed and at Ease

Largest areas of improvement of over 68% reported being more relaxed after the program.

Figure 9



Quote:

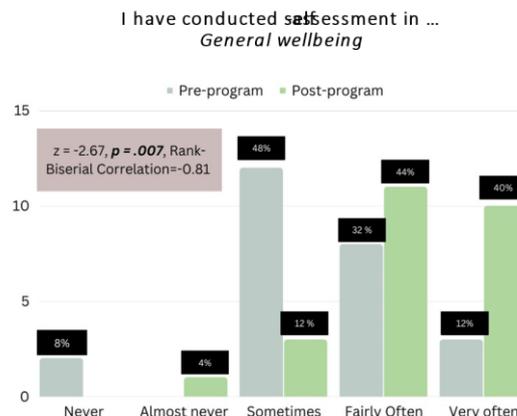
A5: *“More relaxed and focused, and also higher levels of resilience.”*

Another MLP was conducted in April 2023 for over 40 more participants. In contrast to the previous MLPs, significant improvements in self-assessment can be observed in all the 10 domains.

Specifically in two domains, the results show a significantly higher proportion of participants had reported higher general well-being and being relaxed after the program ( $z = -2.67, p = .007$  and  $z = -3.25, p = .001$ ).

Figure 10

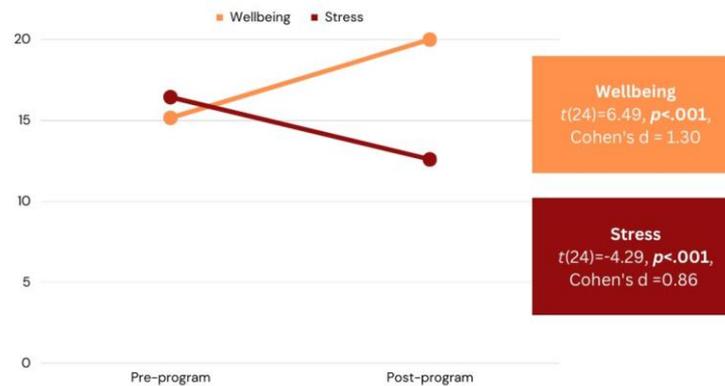
Significantly higher proportion of participants rated that they did self-assessment in their general wellbeing after the program



Additional measures of wellbeing, World Health Organisation - Five Well-Being Index (WHO, 1998) and the Perceived Stress Scale, PSS-10, (Cohen, Karmarck & Mermelstein, 1983) were also incorporated to the pre and post instruments. And the results revealed that participants' wellbeing significantly improved from pre-program to post-program, and participants' levels of stress significantly reduced from pre-program to post-program.

Figure 11

Participants reported significantly higher wellbeing and lower levels of stress post-program



### Shift in Consciousness

Qualitative Results from participants indicated and reported improved levels of consciousness.

Some of the quotes on being more conscious are:

*“Being conscious and present in every part of our lives.”*

*“Being conscious and aware is very core. It extends to how our spiritual, mental, physical and emotions integrate and collaborate within ourselves and beyond ourselves to our community.”*

*“Consciousness, awareness, and clarity of thoughts and the surrounding environment and people in everything we do.”*

*“Maintaining an internalized consciousness of one's thoughts and actions.”*

*“To be conscious of our bodies, feelings and things happening around us.”*

Results of greater consciousness translates to living habits and other aspects of health and wellness, as well as reported positive change of behaviors.

*“Having awareness and being conscious about physical and mental wellness of oneself.”*

*“Conscious of the present moment. Mindful of action, words and living in the present moment and not living in the past shadows.”*

*“Being conscious of every action that I take to any stimulus. Being conscious in every activity that I undertake.”*

The results of the study showed that the mindfulness program had a positive impact on the majority of the participants, with sustainable and positive behavioural change and long-term physical health improvements observed as a direct result of the program. From the qualitative evidence provided, it was evident that the program also impacted their reported behaviours, lifestyle, work productivity and relationships.

Outcomes from across all 4 programmes indicate the efficacy of the MLP, especially in improving self-consciousness on different wellbeing indicators. The current MLP’s efficacy is slightly higher than the past programmes in areas of self-assessment results in the post-program data, and specific measures of well-being and stress administered in MLP4 showed significant improvements in participants.

### **Conclusion and Implications**

The findings of this study suggest that mindfulness programs can be effectively implemented in corporate settings to improve physical well-being, organizational satisfaction, performance, and work, relational, and family well-being.

The impact of the results demonstrated validates the fact that mindfulness programs increase awareness, insight, wisdom, compassion, and equanimity (Goldstein, 2002; Kabat-Zinn, 2000). Other organisational impact, resulting from the benefits of becoming more mindful, thus translates to higher focus, efficiency and productivity at work, which improves employee well-being, resilience, engagement, stress management and job satisfaction (Baer, Smith, Hopkins, Krietemeyer and Toney, 2008).

The study's implication is that this program can be replicated for other corporate executives to achieve similar positive outcomes.

Future research could involve a longitudinal study, looking into areas of sustained benefits to the individual as well as their organisation. And how this will impact their organisation and business results in areas of better decision-making and improved operational efficiencies, as a direct result of achieving improved mindfulness, better well-being, relaxation and focus from this MLP program.

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