"How corporate mindfulness leads to organizational agility? Exploring the roles of employee knowledge sharing and resilience"

Abstract

Purpose: Drawing on Broaden and Build (B&B) theory, this study develops and tests a theoretical model to investigate how corporate mindfulness fosters organizational agility. The proposed model further examines the mediating role of knowledge sharing in the above relationship and the moderating role of employee resilience in the relationship between employee knowledge sharing and organizational agility.

Design/Methodology: The study sample consisted of 268 employees working in Pakistani service organizations. The SPSS Process macro was used to test the study hypotheses.

Findings: Corporate mindfulness was found to significantly positively impact organizational agility. Knowledge sharing partially mediated this relationship. However, the interaction effect of employee resilience in the knowledge-sharing and organizational agility relationship was insignificant.

Implications: Our study contributes to understanding one of the underlying mechanisms through which corporate mindfulness influences organizational agility. We discuss the study's implications for theory and practice, limitations, and directions for future research.

Originality: This study provides empirical evidence on the workplace mindfulness and organizational agility relationship. Moreover, this study presents a holistic view of mindfulness by considering its Eastern origins and Western adaptations and offers a unique angle of the Islamic perspective on mindfulness in the global south country. It acknowledges the critique of corporate mindfulness and emphasizes the balanced approach that can lead to positive organizational outcomes such as organizational agility.

Key words: Corporate mindfulness, knowledge sharing, employee resilience, organizational agility, broaden and build theory.

Introduction:

One of the biggest challenges modern organizations face is managing the change that context dictates. Organizations aspire to become agile, which means adaptable in terms of what they do, the strategy they engage in, the structures they set up, and the products and services they offer (Holbeche, 2019). Organizational agility is to search the nature of the organizational environment and identify opportunities to cope with the turbulence and dynamism in the marketplace (Menon and Suresh, 2021). Often, organizations struggle to become agile, failing to respond to the complexity of the marketplace. For agile organizations, it is significant that employees need to be flexible, adaptable, and open to new ideas. This willingness is not merely dependent on the knowledge of what employees think or know but is largely dependent on how employees feel about

their organizations, their aspirations, apprehensions, and points of view (Holbeche, 2019). Organizations, while responding to the challenges of dynamism, expect employees to embrace the changes and progress regardless of any turbulences (M and V, 2023). In this regard, it can be argued that corporate mindfulness may help employees deal with turbulence and complexity in the organizational environment. Mindfulness boosts agility by helping employees to alleviate and regulate attention and enhance cognitive capability and flexibility. With enhanced cognitive resources, mindful employees can maneuver more effectively in disrupting environments (Lyddy *et al.*, 2016) and deal with resultant changes (Charoensukmongkol, 2016).

Agile organizations rely on dynamic networking to quickly collect knowledge and expertise to create optimum value (Holbeche, 2019). Therefore, we argue that one of the core competencies of an agile organization is to access and create knowledge to sustain the ever-changing environment (Menon and Suresh, 2021). Similarly, recent literature on organizational change identifies resilience as an important construct. The empirical evidence on employee resilience supports the notion that resilient employees are better able to cope with unprecedented changes due to their endurance and adaptability. Employee resilience is the adaptive and resource utilizing capability that assists employees to deal with changes and hard times in the organizations (Malik and Garg, 2017). Therefore, we believe that employee resilience can also play a significant role in making organizations agile.

Extending the organizational agility debate in the economic context, it can be argued that organizations need to be more agile in emerging markets as compared to stable developed markets. Organizations in emerging markets face different and immense challenges as compared to those in the developed markets. Emerging markets have high institutional gaps, market dynamism, and limited legal protection for property rights, and at the same time, there is a high degree of volatility in the social, political, and economic systems (Ferraris *et al.*, 2022). One such example is Pakistan which is an emerging market that has a complex, volatile, and unpredictable environment where organizations go through complex and contrasting processes to deal with different stakeholders (Ahmed *et al.*, 2022). Recently, researchers have highlighted the need to understand how various factors affect organizational agility t in the era of unprecedent change especially in the volatile economies (Gölgeci *et al.*, 2020).

Similarly, mindfulness should also be studied in the social contexts that differ due to modernization and economic situations (Kirmayer, 2015). Mindfulness has been characterized as something that transcends context and culture. The concept of mindfulness varies across cultures (Kirmayer, 2015). In one cultural context, individuals may perceive that non-judgmental, present-oriented attention is valuable for the nurturing of human beings; this will significantly affect one's understanding of mindfulness. Whereas in the other cultural context, traditions and practices place

emphasis on the other evaluative and ruminative practices, which consider that non-judgmental, present-oriented attention is not enough (Davis, 2015).

Based on the above discussion, this study seeks to answer the research question, "How corporate mindfulness affect organizational outcomes in a global south country?" The objectives of this study are twofold: First, investigate the relationship between corporate mindfulness and organizational agility based on the data of service organizations in Pakistan-a developing economy in global south. We then propose one of the possible underlying mechanisms through which corporate mindfulness influences organizational agility, such that we employ knowledge sharing as a mediating variable, whereas employee resilience is proposed as a moderator in the relationship between employee knowledge sharing and organizational agility.

Our study contributes to the existing literature in the following ways: First, our study investigates corporate mindfulness and highlights the positive consequences and boundary conditions to well inform theory and practice. In doing so, our study responds to the recent call of (Choi *et al.*, 2022a) to investigate the positive influence of mindfulness on automated behavior at the employee level and further how it impacts outcomes at the organizational level. Secondly, previous studies on mindfulness have mostly focused on the global north, where well-developed support networks and infrastructures enable mindful individuals to prosper in difficult times (Alo *et al.*, 2023). There is a lack of empirical evidence on corporate mindfulness and organizational agility from the countries in the global south, where social insecurities and institutional voids are common. Additionally, researchers have highlighted the acceptance of mindfulness-based interventions for the followers of theistic religions such as Islam that differ from secular and Buddhist viewpoints. Mindfulness-based interventions are becoming popular in the countries with a Muslim majority population (Thomas *et al.*, 2017) in the global south. However, there is the lack of research about mindfulness in the global south, especially in non-Buddhist countries. Therefore, relying on Broaden and Build (B&B) theory (Fredrickson, 2004), the current study adds to the current stream of literature on mindfulness and organizational agility by uncovering the nexus between workplace mindfulness, knowledge sharing, employee resilience, and organizational agility in the unique context of global south country Pakistan.

Theory and Hypotheses

Corporate mindfulness and Organizational Agility

Mindfulness is studied as a construct, sometimes as a trait or a state, and sometimes as a practice. There is a lack of consensus on its exact definition, but generally it is defined using two components. a) accepting, non-judgmental, open to experience attitude, and b) individual focus on their present-moment experiences (Choi *et al.*, 2022b). Simple examples of mindfulness are experiences such as noticing ''the positions of our hands and the sensations of holding a knife and bagel,'' being aware of ''our bodies sitting in the car when we drive,'' and "noticing the traffic on

the road, and the passing scenery." Being mindful means, in the traffic example, that one notices the heavy traffic when it is jammed or moving slowly on the road but restrains from judging it negatively or thinking about how it might look on an alternate route (Glomb et al., 2011 p:118).

Research investigates individual mindfulness from two perspectives: Eastern and Western (Weick and Putnam, 2006). A Western perspective considers mindfulness as a form of information processing. Mindfulness is the active differentiation and refinement of existing categories, the formation of new categories to make sense of the experience of new events, and the exact recognition of new context and coping mechanisms. Whereas the Eastern perspective on mindfulness is inspired by Buddhism, which considers mindfulness as responsive attention to present occurrences and experiences happening externally and internally or a quick, non-judgmental, nonresponsive awareness (Vogus and Sutcliffe, 2012).

Different cultures have different effects on mindfulness (Cook and Cassaniti, 2022; Raphiphatthana Buaphrao et al., 2019; Somaraju et al., 2021). In the cultural context, religious orientations other than Buddhism may impact the way individuals experience and interpret mindfulness-based approaches. The Western secular version of mindfulness is derived from Eastern spiritual traditions, especially Buddhism. Mindfulness-based interventions such as mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR), mindfulness cognitive behavioral therapy (MBCT), and mindfulness-based relapse prevention (MBRP) are often considered as an integration of Western and Buddhist psychology (Isgandarova, 2019). In the context of Islamic countries such as Pakistan, it is noteworthy to mention that the review of Islamic literature on theology and psychology shows that many aspects of these mindfulness interventions are also present in Islamic tradition and have been a significant element of Sufism, such as muraqaba, which is translated in English as "meditation" (ibid.).

Further, there are several Islamic teachings available that have connections to the ideas of mindfulness-based interventions. These Islamic descriptions provide supplementary understandings and exercises that may generally support treatments related to mental conditions. For example, there is a considerable text in the Islamic religious manuals to deal with distraction and wandering of mind to foster presence of mind during daily five-time prayers (Doufesh *et al.*, 2012). Prayer is among the five pillars of the Islamic faith according to teachings of Quran. Prayer is an act of worshipping that involve physical moments and recitation of Quranic verses. While offering prayers, Muslims use four main physical positions, standing, bowing, prostrating and sitting (ibid.). However, it is permitted to pray sitting down if one experiences pain while standing, or one can even pray lying down if seating causes pain to avoid distraction of mind due to pain. Similarly, it is advised not to pray in places where one might get distracted (Thomas *et al.*, 2017). According to Badri (2018), the real purpose of mindfulness is God-centric; the strict contradiction between Islam and the West and Islamic contemplation and Eastern meditation may blur the

significant intersections that may exist between these traditions. The outcomes of tafakkur" (Islamic contemplation) notably mirror the ultimate objectives found in Buddhist meditative practices and Vedantic traditions, which similarly aim to guide practitioners toward the realization of ultimate metaphysical reality.

Eastern conceptualization of mindfulness recognizes it as a process. Buddhist mindfulness is associated with liberative psychological alterations that reduce ego through elimination of mental disorders and harmful dispositions, while improving ethical and moral development and a humane concern for the wellbeing of all (Purser and Milillo, 2015). The popularity of mindfulness in the West is somewhat connected with the commercialization of Buddhism and has surfaced as a new capitalist spirituality. It has sparked criticism because secular mindfulness meditation does not emphasize moral and ethical behavior significantly, but instead of helping people overcome their egos and sense of self, it led to the development of social liabilities (Burton and Vu, 2021). In the organizational context, instead of being utilized as a long-term, moral, comprehensive practice that fosters mental clarity and physical focus, mindfulness has been reduced to its usefulness in achieving organizational goals (ibid.). This study operationalizes mindfulness as a present moment awareness characterized by non-judgment. This definition reflects social-cognitive approach based on eastern mindfulness (Choi *et al.*, 2022b)

Corporate mindfulness is an actionable practice in which employees exhibit specific behaviors which assist them to stay focused in the present-moment job tasks (Zivnuska et al., 2016). Despite the empirical evidence on the positive outcomes of mindfulness, its critiques contend that mindfulness advances a capitalist agenda, uses practitioners as submissive neo-liberal agents, and transforms employees to adapt to the unfair circumstances of modern workplaces (Cook and Cassaniti, 2022). Therefore, researchers have called for a balanced perspective on mindfulness (Choi *et al.*, 2022a) in the organizations which presents not only its benefits but also consider its dark side and limitations, which are often overlooked (Choi *et al.*, 2022b). For example, mindfulness training programs are often criticized to be individualistic, excessively performance oriented, or contradicting traditional collective wisdom traditions (Holm and Islam, 2024).

Employees in modern-day organizations are likely to experience negative emotions due to economic and technological changes that have transformed the nature of work and threaten job security. Consequently, workplaces are becoming more challenging for employees to maintain mental equilibrium, mainly because of information overload. Intense connectivity has blurred the line between home and office and affected work-life balance, often leading to mental health issues. At the same time, increased connectivity has fostered networking, but still, people feel alone and lost (Quelch and Knoop, 2018). A non-judgmental and nonreacting approach towards negative events can reduce the long-term psychological impact of negative stimuli, thus helping employees to focus on the present. Mindfulness can assist employees in redirecting attention from negative

thought processes such as worrying or anxiety about the past and future This present moment awareness facilitates employees to enjoy the current pleasurable experiences (Johnson *et al.*, 2021), employees can concentrate on new life possibilities and opportunities that help them in challenging situations (Lin *et al.*, 2016).

Mindful employees learn to cope with such negative emotions and exhibit greater emotional and behavioral flexibility, which helps them endure, succeed, and positively convert their environments and behaviors (Garland *et al.*, 2010). According to B&B theory, mindfulness broadens and positively influences the attentional processes that lead to procreative and adaptable thinking styles. Mindfulness decreases the cognitive disruptions that lead to anxiety, avoidance, and depressive moods that cause employees to believe they are helpless (Garland *et al.*, 2010). Researchers argue that individual mindfulness controls negative functioning, which consequently leads to positive outcomes such as improved interpersonal relationships, behavioral management, mental and physical health (Vogus and Sutcliffe, 2012).

Based on these arguments in the current study, we argue that mindfulness at the workplace leads to organizational agility. Mindful individuals in dynamic environments will be concerned about the effect of being preoccupied with failure on their minds and can ask questions like, can I concentrate on eliminating distractions and focus on work calmly? and am I able to return to my work when my mind moves aimlessly? Mindfulness can help individuals identify the subtle causes of such stress and look for ways to cope with it so they can focus on their present task (Weick and Putnam, 2006). Mindful employees disidentify from narratives of vulnerability and upheaval and explore the likelihood of choosing new narratives that are more consistent with reality and well-being (Garland *et al.*, 2010). However, practicing mindfulness may not be beneficial for everyone and might upset some. Therefore, caution is needed by organizations while implementing mindfulness interventions as these may lead to negative and undesirable employee outcomes such as job dissatisfaction, anxiety and stress (Choi et al., 2022b).

Organizational mindfulness is the organization's ability to collect details about emerging threats and developing capability to smoothly respond to these details (Vogus and Sutcliffe, 2012). It is particularly important when the organization operates in a turbulent environment to leverage organizational performance. For example, in the digital transformation context organizational mindfulness is related to mindful prediction of technological changes by employing superior market intelligence and a strategic plan that can efficiently help organizations manage the change (Li et al., 2021). In a turbulent and ever-changing environment, agility is the constant factor that act as a catalyst for the organization (Motwani and Kataria, 2024). To achieve agility organizations, need to scan the market events that manifest significant changes. Mindful organizations can collect more subtle indications from data, information, and reality, and relate these indications with important phenomena. Such organizations, while addressing significant

problems, understand their present circumstances and future business projections and proactively respond through organizing and rearranging resources which is assist entrepreneurial agility (Lee *et al.*, 2020).

Organizations achieve flexibility and reliability by incorporating both collective and individual mindfulness. Collective mindfulness has been identified as a promising competency for agile teams and increases agile team behaviors and practices (Daniel *et al.*, 2022). Daniel et al., (2022) highlighted that in an experimental study a three-minute breathing exercise used to develop mindful attitudes had an immediate positive effect on decision making, perceived effectiveness and listening skills of project team. Similarly, to attain market agility, organizations need high information capacity. The high level of information capability is dependent on the extent to which the employees are mindful of information technology (IT) innovations and their proactive management of IT resources (Wu and Wang, 2017) which is related to individual mindfulness.

Additionally, studies have highlighted various benefits of mindfulness in different organizational contexts. Fraher et al. (2017) investigated the impact of mindfulness in high reliability organizations (HROs). HROs are the organizations that operate in an error-free manner in a complex, unpredictable, and dangerous operating environment. According to (Fraher *et al.*, 2017) this ability of HROs is dependent on organizational mindfulness, or, in other words, the consistent error-free performance of HROs, which is less dependent on the organizational processes and structures but rather influenced by the ability of employees to track and fix the errors and flexibility to adapt to unprecedented events before these errors turn into a big failure. Based on these arguments, we propose:

H1: Corporate mindfulness is positively related to organizational agility.

Mediating Role of Knowledge Sharing in the Relationship between Workplace Mindfulness, and Organizational Agility

Agile organizations are largely dependent on the identification, acquisition, integration, and dissemination of knowledge from the right people at the right time, in the right amount, and in the right way (Rafi *et al.*, 2022). The ability of the organization to manage the knowledge effectively enables it to create an initial response and alteration to industry turmoil and dynamism. In this regard, knowledge sharing between the organizational members leads to collaboration and new knowledge creation faster than the competitors (Al-Omoush *et al.*, 2020).

Knowledge sharing is defined as the process of exchanging knowledge between individuals and groups. This study views knowledge sharing as the behavior of imparting one's gained knowledge to other members within the organization (Ryu *et al.*, 2003). Knowledge sharing is a complicated and constantly changing process (Ye *et al.*, 2021). Although knowledge sharing enhances the organizational ability to stay competitive for the long term by responding timely to market

demands and improvising solutions, but it is hard to convince, persuade, and direct employees to share their knowledge (Idrees *et al.*, 2022).

In this regard, corporate mindfulness reduces the barriers and biases associated with knowledge sharing, such as mistrust, competition, and degrading information. It reduces the cost of knowledge sharing and motivates employees to donate and collect knowledge. Applying B&B approach, we argue that positive affect leads to bias reduction and encourages employees to expand their resources through social interactions, which facilitate knowledge sharing (Pervez *et al.*, 2022).

Additionally, mindful individuals are empathic, less defensive, and flexible enough to react in complex situations. Being mindful makes individuals sensitive to the needs of the people around them, which is related to social awareness; it makes them emotionally available to share knowledge. It also has a positive impact on communication skills and assists people in developing meaningful relationships. It leads to non-judgmental, active listening, which is a prerequisite for sharing and receiving knowledge. Mindfulness allows employees to self-regulate and pause their existing thoughts to focus on the present moment when knowledge sharing is taking place. Moreover, knowledge sharing is also impacted by self-determination, which is enhanced through mindfulness (Rechberg, 2023).

Additionally, corporate mindfulness provides employees with more cognitive, emotional, and psychological resources and helps them restock the resources dedicated to managing unpleasant events. This allows the employees to recognize the importance of knowledge sharing with co-workers (Chen *et al.*, 2022). Greater knowledge access leads to better integration and coordination among various departments of the organization. It allows organizations to quickly sense changes or any critical events in the external environment. When knowledge about new knowledge creation processes flows freely in the organization, it provides the organization with a competitive edge. As these organizations have a strong knowledge base, they can quickly surpass competitors and gain a timing edge (Chung *et al.*, 2012). Therefore, we propose that mindfulness is an employee's personal resource that facilitates knowledge sharing in a demanding organizational context. It can counter employees' negative attitudes towards knowledge sharing (Chen *et al.*, 2022) and will lead to organizational agility. Hence, we hypothesize:

H2: Knowledge sharing mediates the relationship between corporate mindfulness and organizational agility.

Moderating Role of Employee Resilience in the Relationship Between Knowledge Sharing and Organizational Agility

Employee resilience can be defined as the employee's ability that is nurtured and facilitated by the organization, and it assists them to positively manage, adjust, and even excel in the dynamic and demanding environment (Zhu *et al.*, 2019). Employee resilience is related to workplace behaviors such as cooperation on challenging tasks and learning from errors. Employee resilience is not only

dependent on the coping mechanisms of individuals but is also influenced by the resources that the organization provides. Lastly, adversity is not the only condition when an employee enacts resilience; rather, it can be manifested in any kind of work environment. Employees who are more resilient are better able to respond to change because of positive thinking and work behaviors because, in general, they experience less stress (Tonkin *et al.*, 2018).

Mindfulness training can build resilience in employees. Mindfulness promotes positive affect and buffers against negative affect. So, a highly mindful person will have positive effects that will promote high resilience (Johnson *et al.*, 2021). Resilient employees perform better in a continuously changing environment because they accept and fight changing demands and harsh conditions with flexibility and emotional stability. They are optimistic about their success and have positive emotional states, even in the difficult changing context (Lin *et al.*, 2016). Resilient employees engage in meaningful work, can face difficult times, and retain motivation. Resilient employees quickly adapt to new roles and positions in adverse conditions and develop new expertise and skills to support changing business needs that lead to increased organizational agility (Pulakos *et al.*, 2019).

Adopting B&B approach, we argue that employees who possess a high level of resilience in a demanding work environment will use cognitive-behavioral coping strategies such as active planning and reframing to deal with maladaptive thinking and behavior to cope with threats or harm, which will lead to improved outcomes (Gloria and Steinhardt, 2016) such as knowledge sharing. Even in the face of adversity, highly resilient employees will consider engaging in discretionary behaviors for their career fulfillment (De Clercq and Belausteguigoitia, 2017). Based on B&B perspective, we further argue that when people experience positive emotions, it broadens their attitudes, behavioral repertoires, and social candidness. Positive emotions strengthen personal resources by encouraging more innovative ideas, ingenious actions, and social connections (Lin *et al.*, 2016). For example, in the context where employees perceive that their organization is a fair and trustworthy place where they are appreciated, it will elicit positive emotions, which will lead to employee resilience. These positive emotions of resilient employees will increase their feeling of obligation to reciprocate through positive behaviors such as knowledge sharing (Malik and Garg, 2017).

Agile organizations rely on the organizational structures that facilitate knowledge workers to minimize external and internal threats (Rafi *et al.*, 2022). Resilient employees are more responsive, innovative, and better decision makers (Pipe *et al.*, 2012). Highly resilient employees have more energy to find innovative and creative solutions for organizational problems, and they will be keen to suggest operational changes regarding task completion (Kuntz *et al.*, 2016). In terms of social interactions, they are good at constructing social connections through improved communication (Pipe *et al.*, 2012). These social interactions lead to knowledge sharing. Knowledge received from

interactions with external and internal stakeholders assists organizations to be responsive to the needs of customers, access the competition, and respond to fluctuations in the business environment (Rafi *et al.*, 2022). Therefore, in the presence of high employee resilience, the positive relationship between knowledge sharing and organizational agility will be strengthened. Hence, we surmise:

H3: Employee resilience moderates the positive relationship between knowledge sharing and organizational agility such that the relationship will be stronger when employee resilience is high. Based on the above discussion, Figure 1 shows the proposed theoretical framework of the study.

<div align="center">Insert Figure 1 about here.</div>

Methodology:

Sample

Respondents to the study were employees of service organizations such as banks, hotels, and insurance companies located in the twin cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi in Pakistan. Like any other emerging economy, the Pakistani economy is prone to political and economic uncertainties, which result in high business costs (Abbas *et al.*, 2019). In Pakistan, the service sector is a major sector of the economy, with a total contribution of 60.2% to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). In emerging economies like Pakistan, legal systems take time to mature and strengthen. As a result, laws are enforced disproportionately across regions and industries. This institutional feature of inconsistency in the implementation of laws causes uncertainty and makes businesses vulnerable to unethical and unlawful behavior (Zhang *et al.*, 2022). In this context, service organizations must focus on developing organizational agility for their survival. Agile organizations can exploit the opportunities and deal with the threats in a timely and efficient way, which helps them gain leverage in the marketplace in their respective ecosystems (Holbeche, 2019). However, organizational agility needs updated market knowledge and collaboration to explore novel opportunities in volatile marketplaces. Businesses lack reliable information about market and regulatory changes. Therefore, the influence of knowledge sharing among employees in developing organizational agility becomes extremely important. Similarly, according to (Kuntz *et al.*, 2016) building employee resilience is crucial, especially in the context of Pakistani organizations, because employees in emerging economies need strength and resilience to overcome innate difficulties.

Data was collected from the employees holding high and middle level managerial positions (branch, operations, finance and human resource managers) in the various branches of four private sector banks, three insurance companies, and twelve hotels. Our sample well suits the study objectives because managerial employees can gain knowledge about organizational agility through different channels and experiences. For example, an organizational culture that values adaptability and continuous improvement helps employees gain an understanding of agility in their work

context. Similarly, given the rapid market dynamism, digitalization, and regulatory requirements, organizations in the service sector often provide trainings on mindfulness, customer service, product development, and change management to educate managerial employees about agile practices and promote an agile mindset in the organization.

Procedure:

A total of 300 questionnaires were distributed among the employees working in the various departments of service organizations. Data was collected from the employees holding managerial positions in the various branches of four private sector banks, three insurance companies, and twelve hotels. Our sample well suits the objectives of the study because managerial employees can gain knowledge about organizational agility through different channels and experiences. Self-administered questionnaires were used to collect the data. Using purposive sampling, the participants were initially contacted via email with an attached cover letter and consent form. The cover letter explained to participants the purpose of the study. It assured respondents that there is no right or wrong answer and their participation in the survey is completely voluntary. Confidentiality among participants was assured through anonymity, and they were informed that the survey didn't require them to disclose any personal information such as names, personal phone numbers, or any other identifiable information, and privacy will be maintained throughout all stages of research, such as data analysis, interpretation, and publication.

Lastly, the cover letter explained to participants that the data collected for the research will be stored in a password protected system with only access to the researchers and will be solely used for this research. All participants were given the right to give consent and withdraw at any time without giving any reason. The authors then personally visited the workplace to contact the respondents who were interested in participating in the survey and encouraged them to fill out the questionnaire in the first meeting, and in case the respondent was busy, the online questionnaire link was sent via email. Nonrespondents were sent reminder emails to boost the response rate. We received 275 questionnaires. After careful examination of the responses, the questionnaires that were incomplete were discarded. A total of 268 complete questionnaires were used for the final data analysis.

Measures

The 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) was used to rate all measurement items of study variables.

Corporate mindfulness: We measured corporate mindfulness using 5-items adapted from the research work of Zivnuska et al. (2016). Sample items are "when my attention gets sidetracked at work, I make a disciplined choice to refocus my efforts upon my work, and when interrupted from a task I am engaged in at work, I am able to clear my mind and dive back into the task."

Knowledge Sharing Behavior: A six-item measurement scale was used to trace the level of respondents' knowledge sharing, and the scale was adapted from the research work of Chennamaneni et al. (2012). Example items are I shared factual knowledge (know-what) from work with my colleagues and I shared work experiences with my co-workers.

Employee Resilience: Data on employee's resilience was collected using nine items scale adopted from the research work of Näswall et al. (2019). Sample items are "I use change at work as an opportunity for growth and I successfully manage a high workload for long periods of time. However, two items "I seek assistance at work when I need specific resources"", and "I approach managers when I need their support" were dropped from the final analysis due to cross factor loadings in exploratory factor analysis.

Organizational Agility: Organizational agility has emerged as a significant concept in recent times but there is limited consensus on how it should be measured (Ludviga and Kalvina, 2023). In this research we have adapted research work of Lu and Ramamurthy (2011) to measure organizational agility as perceived by the employees. This approach is consistent with the recent studies that have assessed organizational agility as perceived by employees (Ludviga and Kalvina, 2023). Example items are "we fulfill demands for rapid response, special requests of our customers whenever such demands arise; our customers have confidence in our ability, and We constantly look for ways to reinvent/reengineer our organization to better serve our marketplace."

Results:

Reliability Analysis

The Cronbach alpha coefficient value was calculated to measure the internal consistency of the items included in scales of four variables. The reliability analysis shows that the Cronbach alpha coefficient values showed acceptable reliability for each scale (i.e., α = 0.70 or above). The Cronbach alpha coefficient value for the mindfulness scale is 0.805, knowledge sharing behavior is 0.708, employee resilience is 0.817, and organizational agility scale is 0.845. Therefore, it is concluded that items on four scales showed satisfactory discriminatory power.

Common method bias

To test the presence of Common Method Bias (CMV), we run the Harman single-factor test (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2003). Using exploratory factor analysis, we examined the unrotated factor solution by applying principal axis factoring. A single factor or one general factor accounted for the total 28.7% variance. The total variance extracted by one factor didn't exceed 50% for our data, which shows that the single factor that emerged didn't show the majority of the covariance among the measures; therefore, it is concluded that there was no substantial threat of CMV present in our data.

Factor Analysis

We conducted Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) to evaluate the structure of variables. Before conducting EFA, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's tests of sphericity were done to analyze the sample adequacy and the factorability of the correlation matrix. Principle component analysis with Promax rotation was employed. Factors were extracted with an eigen value >1, and the factor loading criteria was set at ≥.40. The results revealed that Bartlett's test for sphericity was significant, indicating that the correlation matrixes were suitable to proceed with EFA. The KMO index of sampling adequacy was.89. There were no cross-factor loadings, and the cumulative variance extracted for four factors was 54.16%. To assess the validity of scales, we carried out the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). Table 1 shows that the results of the CFA indicate a satisfactory fit between the measurement model and the data. Values of model fit indices meet the criteria for suitable model fitness (χ2 = 442.187, df = 245, CMIN/df = 1.80, RMSEA = 0.055, CFI = 0.916, IFI = 0.905, and SRMR = 0.054). We also tested the alternative models (3-factor, 2-factor, and 1-factor models). Comparisons of these models with the 4-factor model show that the initial 4-factor model has the best model fit as compared to the other models with less latent constructs.

Insert Table 1 about here.

Descriptive and Pearson Correlation

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation between the four measures. The mean and standard deviation of the variables of study are corporate mindfulness [Mean =2.679, SD = 1.321], knowledge sharing [Mean = 3.460, SD =.824], employee resilience [Mean = 3.993, SD =.739], and organizational agility [Mean = 3.788, SD =.695] respectively. Corporate mindfulness is found to have a significant positive relationship with knowledge sharing (r =.320, p <0.01), employee resilience (r =.392, p <0.01), and organizational agility (r =.565, p <0.01). Results reveal further that knowledge sharing is found to be significantly and positively associated with employee resilience (r =.556, p >0.01) and organizational agility (r =.353, p > 0.01). Whereas employee resilience and organizational agility were also significantly and positively associated with each other (r =.524, p <0.01).

Insert Table 2 about here.

Hypotheses Testing

PROCESS macro model 4 was utilized to test the mediation hypothesis (Hayes, 2017). Results in table 3 indicated that corporate mindfulness was a significant predictor of knowledge sharing (β =.3625, SE =.0657, p <.001, 95%CI [.2332,.4919]) and that knowledge sharing was a significant predictor of organizational agility (β =.1618, p <.001, SE =.0441, 95%CI [.0751,.2486]). Furthermore, corporate mindfulness was still a significant predictor of organizational agility after controlling for the mediator, knowledge sharing (β =.5398, SE =.0483, p <.001, 95%CI [.4447,.6350]), proving the case of partial mediation. The indirect effect using the bootstrap

estimation approach with 5000 samples is also significant (β =.0587, SE = .0208, 95% CI [.0224;.1040]), as the lower and upper-level confidence intervals don't include zero. Hence, hypotheses 1 and 2 were supported.

Insert Table 3 about here.

To test the moderation analysis, we employed Model 1 of PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2017). Results in table 4 show that the interaction term of knowledge sharing × employee resilience was insignificant (R^2 =.2847, $F_{(264)}$ = 35.0222, p <.001, ΔR^2 =.0046, $F_{(264)}$ = 1.7010, p >.05, β = -.1071, $t_{(268)}$ = -1.3042). Hence, hypothesis 3 was not supported.

Insert Table 4 here.

Discussion:

Our findings emphasize that corporate mindfulness helps employees be adaptive and responsive to unprecedented organizational changes, which leads to improved organizational agility. Businesses in emerging economies inherently operate in uncertain and complex environments. Therefore, employees in emerging economies face resource deficit due to difficult economic and workplace circumstances and are more prone to stress (Ntim *et al.*, 2023) and negative emotions. According to B&B theory, negative emotions limit the focus of an individual's thought processes and behaviors by limiting their understanding of available options. A narrowing of attention forces individuals to focus on false memory tasks rather than analyzing the bigger picture. Mindfulness redirects attention from negative thought processes and helps individuals recognize and explain their internal states, which can help them accept opportunities (Johnson *et al.*, 2021).

Our findings are consistent with the previous studies suggesting that corporate mindfulness leads to higher meaningful personal engagement (Pirson *et al.*, 2018), which leads to powerful, balanced, and internal motivation. This motivates employees to willingly find solutions to difficulties arising from environmental volatility. They are motivated to divert time and energy to develop their competencies to deal with uncertain situations (Cai *et al.*, 2018). Although mindfulness helps employees in stress reduction at the workplace, caution is needed as it may lead organizations to get away from the critical reflection needed to improve the way they operate by placing the sole responsibility on employees (Town *et al.*, 2024).

In highly developed economies, there is an increasing demand on employees' emotional, psychological, and cognitive capacities, leading to strain and discontent. Mindfulness techniques are used to address worker discontent without confronting the underlying social and economic causes. Managerial elites have strongly supported mindfulness interventions to address employee issues and employees have also embraced these interventions (Caring-Lobel, 2016). Our study highlights that the main purpose of mindfulness is fundamentally God-centered and aimed at spiritual growth, enlightenment, and transcendence. However, mindfulness in the West is often belittled and reduced to an instrument to increase focus and clarity at the workplace. This

represents a profound misuse of a sacred spiritual practice to increase human power in which the God has become irrelevant (Badri, 2018). Mmindfulness and its related interventions should be viewed with caution in countries with Muslim majority population, as some of their elements could be hard for practicing Muslims to accept. For example, accepting one's psychiatric problem without passing judgment may be challenging from a religious standpoint. Some Muslims could be reluctant to engage in yoga and meditation exercises as they may perceive them as a form of prayer that is not directed towards God (Abdulkerim and Li, 2022).

Our findings confirm the mediating effect of knowledge sharing in the relationship between corporate mindfulness and organizational agility. According to B&B theory, mindfulness leads to increased cognitive flexibility, which is a form of broadening behavior that expands an individual's perspective, assists in new ideas and actions, and reduces inherent cognitive biases (Pervez *et al.*, 2022) and improves interpersonal skills (Rechberg, 2023). Therefore, we argue that mindfulness can assist employees to engage in productive social interactions that promote knowledge sharing (Pervez *et al.*, 2022). In the quest to acquire new knowledge employees alter their existing knowledge. It enables them to detect change related problems and suggest solutions. Knowledge sharing assist employees to develop agile behaviors such as creativity, adaptability, responsiveness and resilience (Almahamid, 2018).

Service organizations in emerging economies face intense competitive pressure from domestic and international competitors due to increased domestic market growth and globalization. The institutional and market mechanisms are weak, and businesses lack access to reliable information about market and regulatory changes. Moreover, organizations in emerging economies often lack internal resources to cope with dynamic environments (Zhang *et al.*, 2022). For such organizations, knowledge sharing among the organizational members can enhance their capacity to create innovative products and services faster than their competitors (Marjerison *et al.*, 2022).

The interaction effect of employee resilience on the relationship between knowledge sharing and organizational agility is unsupported. This unanticipated finding may be attributed to the prerequisite of independent thinking to exhibit resilience in the context of Asian culture. (Raphiphatthana Buaphrao *et al.*, 2019) argued that non-judgmental present-moment attention benefits more Western individuals to stay resilient and face setbacks as compared to Eastern individuals during times of adversity. The cross-cultural literature highlights that Asians and Americans differ in the construction of self-construct. For Americans, positive self-perception is very important, especially since high self-esteem and self-efficacy predict high performance in the West. Whereas Asian individuals have a propensity to focus on their shortcomings and identify ways to improve, this encourages them to make improvements to their strengths. While East Asians do not tend to self-enhance, Westerners do. Hence, rather than attempting to maintain a good self-image during this difficult time, East Asian's drive to gain from being self-critical and

identifying elements of themselves that need improvement. Consequently, mindfulness helps Western individuals stay resilient during difficult times by facilitating their retention of positive self-image, while East Asians may not find this technique relevant in their cultural context (Raphiphatthana Buaphrao *et al.*, 2019).

Another explanation for the unsupported moderating effect is that the availability of resources affects the cognitive appraisal of difficult situations. However, the availability of resources doesn't guarantee resource utilization. Employee resilience is about resource utilization rather than only availability. Employee resilience is very much dependent on the organizational context, unlike personal resilience, which is a relatively stable trait based on genetic factors. No matter how resilient an employee is, if the overall organizational climate is unsupportive of addressing the challenging circumstances, the employee will not be able to act in a resilient way, at least not to their maximum capacity (Näswall *et al.*, 2019).

Theoretical and Practical Implications:

Our study offers implications for literature theory, practice, and society. Although there is an increasing interest in mindfulness, few studies have attempted to investigate how mindfulness relates to organizational-level outcomes such as organizational agility in the context of global south. Therefore, this study advances the knowledge of mindfulness literature by employing B&B theory to precisely explain how it relates to organizational agility in the global south context. We also extend the literature on B&B theory by explaining the process by which mindfulness broadens employee resources and facilitates them to build new resources through knowledge sharing. The unsupported moderating effect of employee resilience reveals that the organizational environment may have features that are incompatible with employee resilience and agility development. The unsupported moderating effects require further empirical investigation.

Our study has also significant practical implications. Firstly, our findings strongly reinforce the importance of mindfulness in the workplace (Johnson *et al.*, 2021). Organizations should nurture the culture of living in and accepting the present reality, especially during times of change. Employees should be encouraged to develop a non-judgmental attitude towards a challenging environment so, with resilience, they can complete complex and dynamic tasks and move along comfortably with teammates having challenging personalities and temperaments (Gunasekara and Zheng, 2019). Promoting novel and innovative interactions among organizational members can help them accept changing realities, it will result in increased knowledge sharing that will lead to organizational agility.

Secondly, in the context of emerging economies like Pakistan employees are likely to face economic challenges and feel stressed due to low GDP, economic growth rate, rising inflation and interest rates. Mindfulness reduces anxiety and stress and increases life satisfaction (Raphiphatthana Buaphrao *et al.*, 2019). Organizations should use positive psychology

interventions. Positive cognitions can be built through training, exercises, or therapies that build employee resources to cope with unanticipated changes (Tonkin *et al.*, 2018). Examples of these are Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction and Mindfulness- Based Cognitive Therapy. However, organizations should be cautious in the myopic use of corporate mindfulness training programs which are highly criticized; researchers have called it cow psychology. Such mindfulness trainings only involve employee's active listening and assume that stress is an employee's personal problem, and these trainings can make employees calmer and happier, who will then be more productive (Purser and Milillo, 2015). Therefore, mindfulness training programs should enable employees to employ their attention to challenge the existing status quo and identify the errors that could lead to organizational failures. Organizations should focus on improving the overall organizational environment, where conducive workplace conditions should be warranted.

Similarly, in countries with Muslim majority population while using these interventions it's critical to address the religious concerns and make it clear to the training participants that practicing meditation and other techniques is not the same as practicing any other religion (Abdulkerim and Li, 2022). In a country like Pakistan having Muslim majority population, it would be beneficial to integrate the basic understanding of Islam and Sufism on various issues related to life, human nature, mental and religious issues into mindfulness-based interventions. Modern Islamic psychotherapy can integrate Sufi practices in a similar way that Western psychotherapy has employed Buddhist practices (Isgandarova, 2019).

Lastly, our study offers societal implications. Based on our study we recommend that policymakers at all levels, when intending to introduce mindfulness-based interventions, should keep an eye on the criticism of mindfulness that highlights that it has wandered away from its true track. Fake mindfulness promotes dysfunctional habits of self-absorption, self-enhancement, and social disengagement. Self-centered thoughts could be counterproductive and cause people to become disengaged from society. At the dreamy end of the mindfulness continuum, the mind of an individual may be full, but the hands are empty, and the individual is unable to get the job done. As a result, issues like suicide and social isolation don't get the required assistance (Krueger, 2018). Society at large and organizations should focus on introducing right mindfulness (Burton and Vu, 2021). In sum, organizations should reevaluate capitalist ideology by considering the purpose of business, actual value of human workers and the effect of existing management practices on society at large. Organizations should take humanist view to organizing that value human dignity and intrinsic value of life (Town *et al.*, 2024).

Limitations and Future Research Directions

The findings of our study should be analyzed considering the following limitations: Firstly, our study was cross-sectional in nature. Future research can examine the same variables over time by employing a longitudinal research design. Data collected on the variables over time will help

researchers track the dynamic interplay between the study variables. Moreover, our sample consisted of employees working in the numerous branches of different service organizations located in the different cities of Pakistan, so it was logistically infeasible for us to use an experimental design. In the future, researchers can employ experimental research designs, such as before- and after-mindfulness-based interventions, to investigate the impact of corporate mindfulness on knowledge sharing and organizational agility. This can provide valuable insights into the practical implications of mindfulness-based interventions at work for fostering organizational outcomes. Future studies can also employ multilevel analysis such that the data can be collected on collective mindfulness within work teams and investigate how team level mindfulness affect individual adaptability and organizational agility.

Secondly, we employed a corporate mindfulness scale that emphasizes the behavioral aspect of mindfulness at the workplace and consider it as a resource that leads to individual and organizational outcomes ((Zivnuska *et al.*, 2016). This measure may not have fully captured the Eastern conceptualization of mindfulness that integrates mindfulness into daily life in a more fluid and unstructured way. Therefore, we recommend future researchers to develop and test corporate mindfulness scale that covers the Eastern aspects of corporate mindfulness place that involves personal transformation and spiritual development.

Thirdly, we collected a relatively small sample from service organizations. Future researchers can conduct the study on diversified, large samples; perhaps cross-cultural samples can provide good insights on how the organizational outcomes of corporate mindfulness vary across countries in global south and global north and consider differences in mindfulness religious and secular approaches. Lastly, our study is purely quantitative in nature; future studies may incorporate methodological triangulation and supplement the quantitative findings with qualitative data using case studies, interviews, and focus group discussions to better explain the deeper and spiritual meaning of corporate mindfulness.

Conclusion

Current study provides empirical evidence and offers new insights on the impact of corporate mindfulness on service organization's agility in a global south country. We found several ways to show 'how' corporate mindfulness paves the way for organizational agility. This study expands our understanding of corporate mindfulness by presenting its eastern origins and western adaptations and offers a unique angle of Islamic perspective on mindfulness in the global south country. By doing so, this study highlights that understanding of cultural and religious aspects of mindfulness can contribute to its effectiveness in modern organizations.

While our findings support that mindfulness supports positive organizational outcomes. However, caution is needed that mindfulness should not be reduced to merely a productivity tool. Organizations should focus on making the overall organizational environment conducive. Here it

is noteworthy that our study reiterates that societal change towards greater equality is needed especially from a business perspective. Organizations should not only provide conducive workplaces to simply extract more from employees but instead take a humanist and spiritual approach, which is what our world currently needs.

Data Availability Statement: The data presented in this study are available on request from the corresponding author.

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Figures
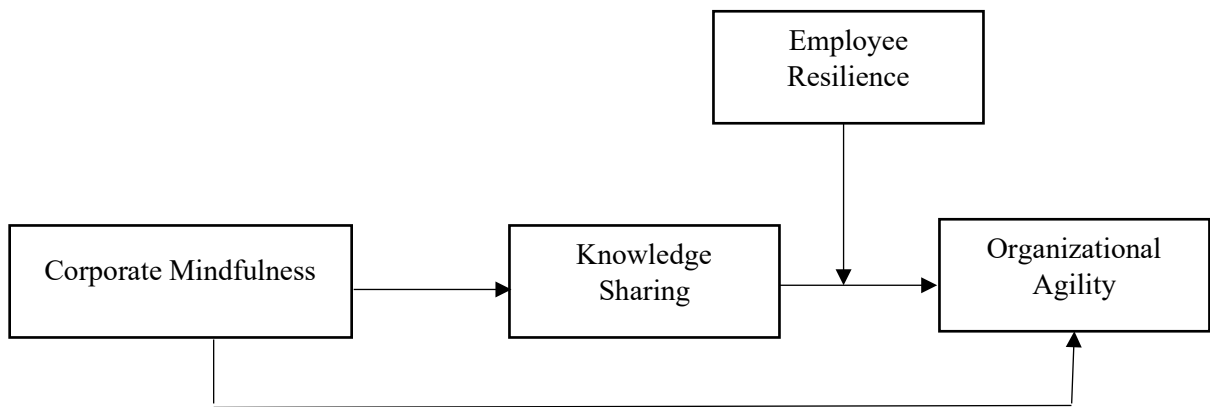
Figure 1: Proposed Theoretical Framework

Source(s): Authors' own work

Tables

Table 1: Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Model	χ^2	Df	CMIN/df	CFI	RMSEA	TLI	SRMR
4-Factor Model	442.187***	245	1.80	0.916	0.055	0.905	0.054
3-Factor Model [a]	750.263***	249	3.01	0.786	0.087	0.763	0.080
2 Factor Model [b]	866.618***	251	3.45	0.737	0.096	0.711	0.083
1-Factor Model [c]	1043.656***	252	4.14	0.662	0.108	0.630	0.092

a =Combining knowledge sharing and organizational agility
b= Combining knowledge sharing and employee resilience
c= Combining knowledge sharing, employee resilience and organizational agility
d= Combining all items
***p <0.001
Source(s): Authors' own work

Table 2: Pearson Correlations (N=268)

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Gender	1.376	.485	1							
2. Age	2.007	1.063	.024	1						
3. Education	2.559	1.045	.195**	.383**	1					
4. Experience	2.679	1.321	-.091	.748**	.393**	1				
5. CM	2.679	1.321	-.058	.091	.100	.054	1			
6. KS	3.460	.824	-.005	.102	.065	.148*	.320**	1		
7. ER	3.993	.739	-.069	.147*	.026	.208**	.392**	.556**	1	
8. OA	3.788	.695	-.020	.176**	.057	.128*	.565**	.353**	.524**	1

Note: CM= Corporate Mindfulness, KS= Knowledge Sharing, ER= Employee Resilience, OA= Organizational Agility
Level of Significance: *p <0.05; **p <0.01

Source(s): Authors 'own work

Table 4: Mediation Analysis

	Coefficient	SE	Bootstrap 95% LLCI-ULCI
IV to the mediator (a path)			
Corporate Mindfulness → Knowledge Sharing	.3625[***]	.0657	[.2332,.4919]
Mediator to DV (b path)			
Knowledge Sharing→Organizational Agility	.1618[***]	.0441	[.0751, .2486]
Total effect Mindfulness at Work →Organizational Agility (c path)	.5398[***]	.0483	[.4447, .6350]
Direct effect Corporate Mindfulness → Organizational Agility (ć path)	.4812[***]	.0499	[.3830, .5793]
Indirect effect			
Corporate Mindfulness → Knowledge Sharing → Organizational Agility	.0587	.0208	[.0224; .1040]

Note: N = 268, PROCESS Model 4, Bootstrap sample size = 5,000, LL = lower limit, UL = upper limit, CI = confidence interval, Level of Significance: ***p <0.001 (two-tailed)
Source(s): Authors' own work

Table 3: Moderation analysis

Predictors	Organizational Agility			
	Coefficient	Standard Error	*t-value*	Bootstrap 95% LLCI-ULCI
Constant	3.8979[***]	.0289	94.8464	[3.7323, 3.8906]
Knowledge Sharing (KS)	.6160	.0638	1.6901	[-.0152, .1990]
Employee Resilience (ER)	.1249[***]	.0501	6.2481	[.2801, .2801]
ER× KS	-.1071	.0376	-1.3042	[-.1699, .0345]
ΔR²= .0046				
F=1.7010				

Note: N = 268, PROCESS Model 1, Bootstrap sample size = 5,000, LL = lower limit, UL = upper limit, CI = confidence interval, Level of Significance: ***p <0.001 (two-tailed)
Source(s): Authors' own work