Being There: The Role of Mindfulness in the Entrepreneurial Process

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Graduate School of Economics and
Osaka School of International Public Policy (OSIPP)
Osaka University, Toyonaka, Osaka 560-0043, JAPAN
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ABSTRACT

The construct of mindfulness has attracted the attention of multiple scientific disciplines. However, research on mindfulness in the field of entrepreneurship remains limited. Research findings suggest that mindfulness through its temporal orientation and wide attentional breadth influences different aspects of cognitions and emotions and is beneficial and cost-effective in a dynamic rather than static environment. Extending these findings to entrepreneurship, I suggest that mindfulness has implications in entrepreneurship because of the environment in which entrepreneurs work and the tasks they usually perform. I propose a theoretical framework for understanding the role of mindfulness in the entrepreneurial process.

Keywords: Mindfulness, cognitions, emotions, entrepreneurship

JEL Classification: L26, M1, M13, M10, M19

Ph.D. Student, Graduate School of Economics, Osaka University. Email: saddamsadozai@gmail.com TEL: 080-8344-0280
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INTRODUCTION

The thinkers from eastern traditions have been talking about the importance of mindfulness for many years (Conze, 1956; Hanh, 1976; Kabat-Zinn, 2005). The philosophy of mindfulness is basically concerned with “being attentive to and aware of what is taking place in the present (Brown & Ryan, 2003, p. 822). The effect of mindfulness on affects and cognitions has been observed in past research and has been found to influence the organizational, interpersonal and individual processes (Dane, 2011). For instance, evidence shows that mindfulness is likely to increase mental and physical health, regulate the behavior (Brown & Ryan, 2003), and enhance the quality of interpersonal relationships (see Brown, Ryan, & Creswell, 2007). Mindfulness was also found to have an impact on judgment and decision making (Ruedy, & Schweitzer, 2010; Weber, & Johnson, 2009), performance in cognitive skills (Beauchemin, Hutchins, & Patterson, 2008; Gardner, & Moore, 2004), stress reduction while working in organizations (Bazarko, Cate, Azocar, & Kreitzer, 2013), regulation of emotions during work, and also in job satisfaction (Hülsheger, Alberts, Feinholdt, & Lang, 2013).

Entrepreneurship researchers also emphasize the importance of cognitions and emotions relevant to entrepreneurship (Baron, 2008). However, research concerning mindfulness remained limited in the context of entrepreneurial processes (Dane, 2011). I argue that mindfulness has an important place in entrepreneurship because of the environments in which entrepreneurs work and the tasks they usually perform (Baron, 2008). Since mindfulness is related to focus on present moment phenomenon and wide attentional breadth, it was also considered costly in past research (Dane, 2011; Tangney, Dobbins, Stuewig, & Schrader, 2017). For instance, focusing
only on the present phenomenon is likely to have limitations and risks (Dobbins et al., 2017). Instead, considering past and future can prove beneficial and cost-effective (Dane, 2011). Additionally, in static environments, maintaining the wide attentional breadth may have limitations. For instance, static environments involve relatively predictable and stable relationships (Edwards, 1962; Nadkarni & Barr, 2008). Therefore, performing tasks in such environments may require a narrow focus on the task at hand (Chajut & Algom, 2003; Easterbrook, 1959). Attending a large number of stimuli in such environments may be unnecessary and can detract from the act of performing the task (Dane, 2011). However, in highly dynamic environments, being mindful by focusing attention on the present moment and maintaining the wide attentional breadth can be efficacious (Dane, 2011; Kahn, 1992). For instance, intuitions captured through mindfulness can serve the individuals to make effective decisions in highly dynamic environments (Simon, 1987). Moreover, because of the continual stream of unpredictable events in the dynamic environment, mindfulness is helpful to gain maximum information by maintaining wide attentional breadth (Dane, 2011; Kahn, 1992). Additionally, mindfulness helps individuals in the regulations of emotions and cognitions in uncertain environments (Brown & Ryan, 2003). Entrepreneurs usually work in highly dynamic environments including uncertainty and risk related to their work (Lichtenstein, Dooley, & Lumpkin, 2006). Therefore, mindfulness may help entrepreneurs maintain the wide attentional breadth to collect maximum relevant information for effective decision making and also in the regulation of emotions and cognitions in highly dynamic environments (Brown & Ryan, 2003; Baer, 2003; Broderick, 2005; Shapiro et al., 2006; Shepherd & Cardon, 2009).

In this article, the research is aimed at mindfulness of entrepreneurs who recognize and exploit new business opportunities, start new ventures and take actions and decision in an
uncertain environment (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). I seek to develop a theoretical framework for the understanding of the potential role of mindfulness in the entrepreneurial process. First, I define and explain the construct of mindfulness. Second, I examine why the mindfulness will be relevant to entrepreneurship. Third, I discuss the findings concerning the interface between mindfulness, cognitions and emotions. Fourth, I develop a theoretical framework concerning the role of mindfulness in key areas of entrepreneurship. In the last section, I discuss the implications of the present theoretical framework.

THE CONSTRUCT OF MINDFULNESS

The roots of mindfulness lie in various lines of ancient Buddhist concept (Brown et al., 2007). However, the concept recently emerges as scientific interest among different disciplines (Dane, 2011). Series of historical and philosophical definitions of mindfulness were used to introduce the concept (e.g., Baer, 2003; Shapiro, Carlson, Astin, & Freeman; Bishop et al., 2004; Gunaratana, 1993; Kabat-Zinn, 2003; Ryan & Brown, 2003). Multiple writers and researchers suggested mindfulness as a state of conscious (Hanh, 1976; Harvey, 2000; Lau et al., 2006; Rosch, 2007). Past research also claims that it is inherited human capacity and anyone at some or other point can be mindful (Kabat-Zinn, 2005). Past research, also argue that mindfulness has dispositional tendencies and mindfulness states of people may vary across situations (e.g., Baer et al., 2004; Giluk, 2009; Walach, Buchheld, Buttenmüller, Kleinknecht, & Schmidt, 2006). Therefore mindfulness is a psychological concept which can be assessed both at trait and at the state level (George, 1996).

In the past mindfulness was considered as a state of conscious which occurs only through meditative techniques (Conze, 1956). Therefore, research scholars came up with techniques for designing mindfulness such as mindfulness-based cognitive therapies (Segal, Williams, & Teasdale, 2002) and mindfulness-based stress reduction (Kabat-Zinn, 1990). Moreover, because
of the link between mindfulness and meditation these two terms were used interchangeably. However, past research argues that the psychological state of mindfulness does not require meditative techniques (Brown & Ryan, 2003). In fact, people can reach the state of mindfulness without using meditation techniques by focusing on the events occurring in the present moment (Giluk, 2009; Narayanan & Moynihan, 2006; Weick & Sutcliffe, 2006).

Mindfulness is defined as “receptive attention to and awareness of present events and experiences” (Brown & Ryan, 2003). Mindful attention means that people should be aware of here and now instead of focusing on their previous thoughts and emotions (Brown & Ryan, 2003; Herndon, 2008, p. 32). In other words during mindfulness state people give full attention to the present moment (Thondup, 1996) or moment to moment awareness (Epstein, 1995). Additionally, mindfulness also involves the attention to both internal and external phenomenon. Thus, focusing on internal processes with the exclusion of external events or vice versa would be constituted as a lack of mindfulness (Dane, 2011).

Research scholars also compared mindfulness with related constructs (absorption, flow, mind wandering, counterfactual thinking, prospection, fantasizing etc.) to elaborate on its uniqueness and distinction for scholarly interests (Dane, 2011). First, the focus of mindfulness is always in the present moment phenomenon. Therefore mindfulness will be different from other attention-related constructs that focus on the past or future (Dane, 2011). Additionally, the mindfulness attentional breadth (the range and a number of stimuli attended to during a certain period of time) is quite large and therefore its scope is very wide (Ansburg & Hill, 2003; Kasof, 1997; Memmert, 2007). For instance, mindfulness has the capacity to capture the events in a very short period of time (Slagter et al., 2007). Additionally, through mindfulness individuals can reach the intrapsychic phenomena which include intuitions (Dane & Pratt, 2009) and affects
(Brown & Ryan, 2003) and this situation may not happen in the absence of mindfulness. In short, according to research scholars, wide attentional breadth and temporal orientation of present moment are distinct features of mindfulness (Dane, 2011).

HOW MINDFULNESS IS RELEVANT TO ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Past research suggested that mindfulness influences the different aspects of cognitions and emotions in organizational work settings (Fiol, & O'Connor, 2003; Levinthal, & Rerup, 2006). Affects and cognitions have relevant implication in entrepreneurship (Baron, 2008). Therefore, I argue that mindfulness is an important variable in the context of entrepreneurship.

Entrepreneurs usually work in a very high uncertain and unpredictable environment (Lichtenstein, Dooley, & Lumpkin, 2006). Past research showed that emotions and cognitions strongly influence each other in uncertain environments (e.g., Forgas, 1995, 2000; Forgas & George, 2001). Research on mindfulness showed that in complex situations, mindfulness helps individuals in regulating emotions and cognitions, enhance vitality and reduce anxiety (Brown & Ryan, 2003; Baer, 2003; Broderick, 2005; Shapiro et al., 2006; Shepherd & Cardon, 2009). Therefore, I argue that mindfulness may have special relevance in entrepreneurship. Secondly, entrepreneurs perform different tasks in the entrepreneurial process, which are also relevant to mindfulness. For instance, mindfulness has shown to have a strong influence on creativity and intuitions (Lebuda, Zabelina, & Karwowski, 2016) which helps entrepreneurs in alertness and recognizing the opportunities in the market (Isen, 1993), on interpersonal relationship quality (Brown, Ryan, & Creswell, 2007) which helps entrepreneurs in acquiring resources, on judgment and decision making (Weber, & Johnson, 2009) which helps entrepreneurs in making effective strategies and decisions, and on physical and mental health (Brown, Ryan, & Creswell, 2007) which is helpful for entrepreneurs in reducing stress and anxiety while working in uncertain
situations (Brown & Ryan, 2003). Since mindfulness has shown to have a strong influence on above activities, therefore I argue that it has direct implication in entrepreneurship.

**AN OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH FINDINGS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MINDFULNESS AND COGNITIONS**

Past research suggested several ways through which mindfulness influences cognitions (Brown & Ryan, 2003). However, I briefly discuss here the findings, which are most relevant to entrepreneurship. One way mindfulness influences the cognitions is through the process of positive affects (Sears, & Kraus, 2009). Past research suggested that mindfulness is significantly related to positive affects (Jislin-Goldberg, Tanay, & Bernstein, 2012) which actually help people see things favorably compare to people suffering from negative affects (e.g., Bower, 1991; Garcia-Marques, Mackie, Claypool, & Garcia-Marques, 2004). Positive affects influence cognitions, and the interface of the two construct helps in performing cognitive tasks effectively (Baron, 2008).

Another way mindfulness influences the cognitions is through creativity (Lebuda et al., 2016), the process of producing novel and useful ideas (Amabile, 1996; Sternberg & Lubart, 1996). According to past research, creativity is one of the keys factors contributing in the entrepreneurial opportunity recognition (Baron, 2008). Mindfulness is linked with the ability to switch perspectives (Carson & Langer, 2006; Feldman, Hayes, Kumar, Greeson, & Laurenceau, 2007), improves the working memory (Chiesa, Calati, & Serretti, 2011), helps in responding in non-habitual fashion (Moore & Malinowski, 2009), and also reduces the fears while making judgments (Carson & Langer, 2006) factors conducive to creativity (Baas et al., 2008; Nijstad, De Dreu, Rietzschel, & Baas, 2010). Past research also related mindfulness to creative achievement (Langer, 2014) and creative thinking (Davis, 2009; De Dreu, Baas, & Nijstad, 2008).
Another way mindfulness influences the cognitions is through intuitions and heuristics (Dane, 2011) which has important implications for tasks performance, problem-solving and decision making (Dane, 2011; Dunne, 2015). Heuristics are useful for entrepreneurs in fast decision making in an uncertain environment (Busenitz & Barney, 1997; Busenitz, 1999). Past research suggested that engaging in heuristics helps an individual in problem-solving and effective decision making while performing novel tasks (Isen, 2000). The conscious state of mindfulness serves as a bridge between past and present by attuning individuals to their experiences that have been distilled into the form of intuitions (Simon, 1987). Moreover, past research also suggested that mindfulness also helps in ethical decision making (Ruedy & Schweitzer, 2010). For instance, several causes of unethical behavior such as self-deception, self-serving cognitions and unconscious biases are likely to be eliminated through mindful attention (Epley and Caruso, 2004; Tenbrunsel and Messick, 2004; Bazerman et al. 2002). Insufficient mindfulness leads to ignorance of ethical standards while making decisions (Ruedy & Schweitzer, 2010).

Another way the mindfulness influences the cognitions is through memory (Van Vugt, & Jha, 2011). Mindfulness helps individuals in reducing the mind wandering while performing tasks and brings focus to the task. (Mrazek, Smallwood, & Schooler, 2012) Mindfulness was proved to be helpful for individuals in attention enhancement (Brefigzynski-Lewis, Lutz, Schaefer, Levinson, & Davidson, 2007; MacLean et al., 2010; Slagter et al., 2007), improvement of the visuospatial processing efficiency (Kozhevnikov, Louchakova, Josipovic, & Motes, 2009), and the increase in the backward digit memory span (Chambers, Lo, & Allen, 2008). Mindfulness draws on the ability to remain aware, irrespective of the apparent valence of states or stimuli, which may alter their impact on memory (Chambers et al., 2008).
Mindfulness also influences the cognitions through its role in coping with stress (Brown, & Ryan, 2003). Entrepreneurs usually work in an uncertain environment with intense workload and responsibilities and likely to suffer from stress and health issues. According to past research, mindfulness is highly useful in reducing stress and in the improvement of health and well-being (Brown, & Ryan, 2003; Xie, Schaubroeck, & Lam, 2008). In fact, mindfulness-based stress reduction programs attracted the attention of organizations (Hyland, Lee, & Mills, 2015). Additionally, mindfulness tends to improve the interpersonal relationship (Brown et al., 20017), reduce interpersonal conflicts (Valentine, Godkin, & Varca, 2010) and helpful in negotiations (Fiol, & O'Connor, 2003). Founders of new ventures are likely to build interpersonal relationships, engage in conflicts and negotiations. Therefore, mindfulness will have an important implication for entrepreneurs involved in new venture creation.

**MINDFULNESS AND KEY ASPECTS OF ENTREPRENEURIAL PROCESS**

Based on the above discussion, it seems clear that mindfulness has implications in the entrepreneurial process. I discuss here some of the key aspects of the entrepreneurial process including entrepreneurial alertness, opportunity recognition, acquisition of human and financial resources by entrepreneurs, the uncertain and unpredictable environment in which entrepreneurs work, and entrepreneurs coping with an intense level of stress (Shane 2003).

**Mindfulness and Entrepreneurial Alertness**

According to past research, alertness is the preparedness of the entrepreneurs to recognize the opportunities when they appear (Gilad, Kaish, & Ronen, 1989; see also Kirzner, 1979). Alertness helps individuals become aware of the opportunities which are overlooked by others (Kirzner, 1979, 1985). Through entrepreneurial alertness, people can interpret and organize the information necessary for opportunity development process (Gaglio and Katz, 2001). For instance, entrepreneurial alertness includes scanning and searching for new opportunities and
connecting the already known information and evaluation of the possible business opportunities
(Tang, Kacmar, & Busenitz, 2012). Therefore, entrepreneurial alertness needs cognitive
processes like active attention, pattern recognition and information processing for the recognition
of potential entrepreneurial opportunities when they are available (Kirzner, 1979; Tang et al.,
2012). According to past research, mindfulness helps people become alive in the present moment
and enhances the information processing in the mind of individuals (Hanh, 1976, p. 11). In
support of this claim, researchers have found that, even in extremely short intervals (measured in
milliseconds), mindfulness increases the number of stimuli that individuals notice in their
environment (Slagter et al., 2007). Additionally, mindfulness increases the attention to the
internal and external present moment phenomenon for gathering the maximum information
(Brown & Ryan, 2003). Therefore, I argue that mindfulness is helpful for entrepreneurs in
paying close attention to the opportunities when they are available. For instance, in the presence
of mindfulness, the perception becomes strong which helps individuals become attentive to the
possible opportunities in the market (Brown & Ryan, 2003; Kirzner, 1979).

Proposition 1: Mindfulness enhances the attention and information processing, thus
contributing to the process of entrepreneurial alertness

Mindfulness and Entrepreneurial Opportunity Recognition

Opportunity recognition is considered as one of the key aspects of the opportunity
development process (e.g., Ardichvili, Cardozo, & Ray, 2003; Baron, 2008; Shane, 2003).
Opportunity recognition involves cognitive cues occurring in the mind of the entrepreneurs (g.,
Bhave, 1994; Herron & Sapienza, 1992). According to past research, mindfulness influences the
cognitive processes necessary for opportunity recognition (Brown & Ryan, 2003). Therefore, it
seems reasonable to argue that this aspect of entrepreneurship is linked with mindfulness. For
instance, there is ample empirical evidence suggested that mindfulness is significantly related to creativity (Lebuda et al., 2016). According to neuroscience evidence, mindfulness monitors the factors conducive to creativity (Carson & Langer, 2006). For instance, mindfulness helps in switching the perspectives and enhance the non-habitual thinking (Carson & Langer, 2006; Feldman, Hayes, Kumar, Greeson, & Laurenceau, 2007; Moore & Malinowski, 2009), and also it is related to creative achievement (Langer, 2014) and creative thinking (Davis, 2009; De Dreu, Baas, & Nijstad, 2008), the factors contribute to opportunity recognition process (Baron, 2003, 2008). Considering the role of mindfulness in above mentioned aspects, I suggest the following proposition.

Proposition 2: Mindfulness enhances the creativity and the non-habitual thinking, thus contributing to the process of opportunity recognition.

Mindfulness and Persuasion of Entrepreneurs in Acquiring Resources

Acquiring the financial and human resources is one of the important factors in the entrepreneurial process for starting new ventures (e.g., Shane, 2003). I argue that mindfulness can help entrepreneurs in the persuasion of others to acquire the resources necessary for the entrepreneurship. Past research found that entrepreneurs are likely to be more successful if they have more social networks (e.g., Singh, 2000). These social networks eventually help entrepreneurs acquire human and financial resources (e.g., Ozgen & Baron, 2007; Walter, Auer, & Ritter, 2006). Mindfulness was found helpful in connection and closeness of relationships (Kabat-Zinn, 1990; Welwood, 1996). In fact, mindfulness helps people regulate the emotions and prevent the destructive and impulsive reactions in different situations (Boorstein 1996). Additionally, mindfulness is helpful in strengthening the interpersonal relationships (Goleman, 2006). For instance, being mindful people becoming aware of verbal, emotional and cognitive
responses of self and others (Goleman, 2006). Moreover, mindfulness promotes the interaction styles for enhancing the quality of the relationship between different people (Brown, Ryan, & Creswell, 2007) and also improves quality of the communication to persuade other people (e.g., Tickle-Degnan & Rosenthal, 1990). Finally, mindfulness also improves the negotiation skills and conflict handling styles (Fiol, & O’Connor, 2003). Combining the above considerations, I argue that mindfulness is beneficial for entrepreneurs to acquire human and financial resources.

**Proposition 3:** Mindfulness enhances the social network capability and improves communication and negotiations, thus relevant for entrepreneurs to acquire all the necessary resources, i.e. human and financial capital.

**Mindfulness and Entrepreneurs’ Ability to Deal with Dynamic Environments**

Entrepreneurs usually work in a dynamic environment with high uncertainty and rapid change. Therefore, mindfulness may play an important role for entrepreneurs to deal effectively with the highly dynamic environment (Baron 2008). According to past research, highly dynamic environment involves rapid change and intense competition (Bourgeois & Eisenhardt, 1988; Nadkarni & Barr, 2008). First, mindfulness is related to a wide internal breadth of attention that helps individuals in controlling their thoughts, emotions and feelings (Kabat-Zinn, 2005; Nyanaponika, 1972). According to past research, positive affects are important in dealing with the dynamic environments where there is a high level of stress and intense competition (Baron 2008). Therefore, through mindfulness entrepreneurs can regulate their emotions to deal with the dynamic environments (Kabat-Zinn, 2005). Additionally, mindfulness helps in maintaining a wide external breadth of attention which is helpful for performing dynamic tasks. For instance, mindfulness plays a key in role in dealing with reactions, critics, argumentation and persuasive tactics (Dane, 2008). Entrepreneurs while working in uncertain environments always face similar
problems. Therefore, it seems reasonable to argue that mindfulness has implications for entrepreneurs to deal with the dynamic environments (Dane, 2008; Alvarez, & Barney, 2005).

Proposition 4: Entrepreneurs by enhancing both internal and external breadth of attention deal with dynamic environments effectively.

Mindfulness and Entrepreneurial Decision Making

Entrepreneurial decision making is one of the key factors in the success of the entrepreneurs (Shepherd, Williams, & Patzelt, 2015). Entrepreneurs usually make different decisions like opportunity evaluation decisions, entrepreneurial entry and exit decisions, decision making in uncertainty. (Shepherd et al., 2015). Past research found that an entrepreneur’s decision to start a new venture is influenced by the active systemic search, scanning and processing of the relevant information (Patel & Fiet, 2009: 503). Cognitions play an important role in scanning and processing of right information (Mitchell, Smith, Seawright, & Morse, 2000). There is ample evidence that mindfulness influences the cognitive processes necessary for scanning and processing the information (e.g. Brown & Ryan, 2003), which is important for entrepreneurs to make the right decisions. Therefore, it seems reasonable to argue that mindfulness is important for entrepreneurs in effective decision making. For instance, mindfulness can help entrepreneurs analyze the different perspectives of decision making and can help entrepreneurs think in a non-traditional way to come up with a better decision (e.g. Carson & Langer, 2006; Feldman, Hayes, Kumar, Greeson, & Laurenceau, 2007; Moore & Malinowski, 2009). Additionally, entrepreneurs work in uncertain environments, and they use intuitions to guide their decisions (Busenitz & Barney, 1997). The intuition is an information processing which includes both cognitive and affective elements (Blume, & Covin, 2011). Previous research found a significant impact of intuitions on new venture creation decisions of
entrepreneurs (see Blume, & Covin, 2011). Research scholars argued that not all the intuitions get the attention by the people, some of them disappears without a conscious notice (Hofmann & Wilson, in press). Mindfulness can help individuals notice their maximum intuitions by enabling them to the phenomenon arising through non-conscious operations (Dane & Pratt, 2009). Additionally, mindfulness can expand the internal attention breadth for attuning individuals to their intuitions (Dane, 2011). Intuitions are also considered to be biased in previous research, but at least in uncertain environments, they proved helpful for entrepreneurs to guide their decisions (Baron, 2008).

*Proposition 5: Mindfulness enhances the entrepreneurs’ capacity to make effective decisions through creative thinking and intuitions.*

**Mindfulness and Entrepreneurs’ Handling of Stress**

According to past research, entrepreneurs usually work long hours, deals with high-risk situations, work in the highly dynamic environment and are likely to face an intense level of stress (Rahim, 1996). Previous research also found that stress does not emerge only because of the particular event but also by the meaning we give to the event (Lazarus & Follkman, 1984; Weinstein et al., 2009). The construct of mindfulness was found to be helpful in adaptive stress appraisal (Weinstein et al., 2009). For instance, mindfulness helps individuals react to the stressful event in a non-traditional way, and mindful people are likely to observe the events more objectively and refrain themselves giving a negative evaluation to the event (Hülsheger, Alberts, Feinholdt, Lang, 2013). Additionally, mindfulness helps individuals not to be affected by the negative thoughts and generate positive affects even in negative situations (Hülsheger et al., 2013). Entrepreneurs usually deal with different events which are stressful, and they are likely to
give negative meanings to the events resulting in to quit the ventures (Baron, 2008) Therefore, being mindful can be one of the coping strategies for entrepreneurs to deal with stressful events (Hülsheger et al., 2013).

**Proposition 6**: Mindfulness reduces entrepreneurs’ intense level of stress through facilitating adaptive stress appraisal and by generating positive affects.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Past research on the construct of mindfulness indicates that it has important implications at individual, societal and organizational level (e.g., Bishop et al., 2004; Brown et al., 2007; Brown & Ryan, 2003). Building on the existing theory, the current study provides new research directions of the construct of mindfulness in the scholarly field of entrepreneurship. Considering the unique nature of mindfulness, I proposed that it has important implications for entrepreneurs because of their working conditions and the tasks they perform. Entrepreneurship scholars urged on investigating the role of cognitions and emotions influencing the entrepreneurial processes (Baron, 2008). Mindfulness influences certain aspects of cognitions and emotions (Brown et al., 2007; Brown & Ryan, 2003). Therefore mindfulness is likely to influence the key aspects of entrepreneurial processes involving entrepreneurial alertness, opportunity recognition, entrepreneurial decision making, entrepreneurs’ dealing with uncertain environments, the entrepreneur’ acquiring of human and financial resources and entrepreneurs’ strategies to cope with the intense level of stress. Our theoretical framework and propositions will be insightful for future work on the role of mindfulness and entrepreneurship.
Practically, this research offered that entrepreneurs while working in dynamic and uncertain environments should focus on mindfulness to perform various complex tasks (Brown & Ryan, 2003). In fact, entrepreneurs can focus on the events surrounding them by maintaining wide external attentional breath and can also monitor their internal states through wide internal attentional breadth (Dane, 2011).

Having noted the potential benefits of the mindfulness for some aspects of entrepreneurship, it will be interesting to find out the downside of the mindfulness for entrepreneurs. For instance, the future scholars could investigate the conditions under which mindfulness is costly for entrepreneurs (Brown et al., 2007). In fact, future research could examine the outcomes of mindfulness vs non-mindfulness states for entrepreneurs (Dane, 2011). Additionally, past research has found that mindfulness is related to ethical decision making (Moore & Loewenstein, 2004). Future research could investigate how entrepreneurs recognize the moral content in the problem at hand through mindfulness (Butterfield, Treviño, & Weaver, 2000; Sonenshein, 2007). For instance, mindfulness may help entrepreneurs consider ethical issues by the expansion of the attentional breadth to the features of the problem at hand (Moore & Loewenstein, 2004). Another important avenue for future research is to determine how and when mindfulness state tends to arise for the entrepreneurs (Brown et al., 2007). For instance, future research could find out the factors that enable the entrepreneurs to achieve the mindfulness state of consciousness (Dane, 2008). Finally, past research also found that mindfulness can be influenced by certain personality traits and being mindful can be learned using meditative techniques (see Sadler-Smith & Shefy, 2007). Therefore, future research could examine personality traits and training as the antecedents of the use of mindfulness in the entrepreneurial context (Sadler-Smith & Shefy, 2007).
Exploration of the construct of mindfulness and its influence on cognitions and affects are promising avenues for entrepreneurship research. I believe that this research is beneficial towards the deeper understanding of the cognitive and affective theories of entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship scholars should further consider the net impact of mindfulness across different areas of entrepreneurship.
REFERENCES


FIGURE 1. Theoretical Model of the Role of Mindfulness in Entrepreneurship

Mindfulness
Dispositional/Meditative

Temporal Orientation
Attentions on events associated with present moment phenomenon

Effect on Cognitions
Memory
Creativity
Intuitions
Perceptions
Judgments
Decision making
Stress handling strategies
Persuasion and negotiation techniques

Impact on Entrepreneurial Process
Entrepreneurial alertness
Opportunity recognition
Entrepreneurial decisions
Responding to uncertain and dynamic environments
Entrepreneurs’ persuasion and negotiations
Enhancing entrepreneurial relationships
Building entrepreneurial social networks
Entrepreneurs’ stress handling

Wide Attentional Breadth (Internal/External)
Number and range of stimuli attended to during a given period of time