

# Daoist Self-Cultivation and Employee Well-Being: Evidence from Indian IT Companies

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**Abstract:** The current investigation appraises the role of self-cultivation in employee well-being. This study analyses the Employees of Indian IT companies. Present study shows that mindfulness, emotional equanimity, meditation and other similar practices enhance the psychological well-being of employees. Moreover, the Daoist philosophy was considered for exploring the spiritual self-cultivation of workers. The employees make of a variety of contemplative practices, like meditation, mindfulness and emotional balance for decreasing stress and increase emotional resilience. Apart from that, these practices enhance the job satisfaction and work-life balance of employees. This study employed a descriptive and analytical research design. A sample of 220 Employees working in Indian IT companies Non-probability sampling was used to select these employees for primary data. TCS, Infosys and Wipro were the companies registered within the selected companies. To collect primary data a structured questionnaire was used. Various statistical tools were used for drawing the conclusion of this study..

**Keywords:** Daoist Self-Cultivation, Employee Well-Being, Mindfulness, Workplace Spirituality, Indian IT Companies, Emotional Resilience, Occupational Stress, Work-Life Balance, Psychological Well-Being, Organizational Wellness.

## Introduction

In contemporary times, organizations are seeing the employee well-being as a strategic issue to be solved as they are interested in sustaining high productivity, innovation and retention. The high-performance work culture, heavy workload, continuous technological changes, and cut-throat competition in the Indian IT sector often disturb the employee; thus, they remain disturbed by the psychology. As a result, workers experience stress, burnout, emotional exhaustion and imbalance in work life. Organizations are now searching for activities beyond their traditional human resource initiatives no matter how good these initiatives are. Many studies of spirituality, mindfulness and philosophy on self-cultivation have attracted considerable managerial and academic interest. Daoist self-cultivation, or SC, is a one-of-a-kind ancient Chinese philosophy that articulates its goals and the means to achieve these goals rather uniquely. The world's foremost goal is inner peace achieved through naturalness, one with nature and oneself, simplicity, non-attachment, and balance.

According to Daoism, the development of inner balance can be achieved through a number of individual and collective self-cultivation practices that promote meditation, breath control, reflection, emotional control and mindful living. Possibly the core idea of nurturing life in Daoist thought is that of preservation, which emphasises health not only on a physical level but also on emotional and psychological levels, and which entails developing awareness of one's own system. In organizational settings, they could be useful contributors to employee resilience, emotional intelligence, depression reduction, job satisfaction, and psychological well-being. Many organizations have noted that employees with inner balance and mindfulness make better decisions.

Indian workplaces in the recent decades have been adopting philosophy and spirituality for workplace life. The recent emergence of organization-level spirituality and mindfulness programs is indicative of the realisation that well-being is not just a physical, economic or occupational issue, but a psychological and existential issue as well. According to a recent study, workplace spirituality which refers to an individual's experience of the work environment as meditative, has a positive impact on employee mental-wellbeing, mindfulness and psychological resilience; Similarly, beneficial outcomes of contemplative practices and mindfulness based Interventions in reducing occupational stress and enhancing employee engagement in the context of technology professionals's experiences have been noted.

In the context of the Indian IT sector, long working hours, remote work, digital fatigue, and performance pressure make it conducive for Daoist self-cultivation. Stress due to work in IT organizations is common. Most employees in the IT companies suffer from work stress due to strict deadlines, uncertainty about requirements, complexities of technology and global competition. An increasing amount of time, employees require coping mechanisms that enable them to maintain their psychological stability and regulate their emotions. By engaging in Daoist self-cultivation, employees can learn to bring calmness, flexibility and self-awareness and be in harmony with the demands of the organisation.

The significance of spirituality and mindfulness in management has been pointed to in literature. The literature on workplace spirituality indicates that meaningful work, compassion, mindfulness, and transcendence have a positive impact on employee well-being and organizational effectiveness. Being in tune with one's environment, as espoused in Daoist philosophy, adds an important dimension to these work elements to cultivate sustainable work attitudes and holistic well-being.

The phenomenon of workplace spirituality and mindfulness has received much scholarly attention in recent times. In particular, limited empirical research studies, especially in India, highlight the role of Daoist self-cultivation in working organizations especially in the IT sector with the help of a

case study. The existing research works especially study mindfulness intervention in the west. Research also examines spirituality in the workplace and its impact on worker wellness.

## Literature Review

In the last three decades, workplace spirituality has witnessed a considerable evolution. As organizations realize the essence of employees' psychological and emotional well-being, it has a very high level of operational performance. Workplace spirituality is about meaningful work, connection with others, inner fulfilment, and compatible values. According to researchers, spirituality in organizations enhances employees' effort, commitment, job satisfaction and emotional well-being.

As per Garg (2017), workplace spirituality positively impact employees' happiness, organisational commitment and productivity. Similarly, Sode et al. (2024) showed that workplace spirituality and mindfulness have a significant positive link with psychological well-being among employees in the Indian context. They also showed that mindfulness mediates the connection between spirituality and employee well-being. Inclusion of contemplative practices for strengthening suggested by the authors.

Organizational behavior research increasingly takes an interest in mindfulness. Mindfulness is the moment-to-moment awareness of our experience with acceptance or paying attention non-judgmentally. Studies show that mindfulness can reduce levels of stress, emotional exhaustion and anxiety and burnout. This also improves employee concentration performance, empathy, and work engagement. The organization The Information Technology task involves high cognitive overload, multi-tasking, streaming of continuous.

According to Sulphery and KJ (2023), Indian employee well-being behaviour occurs due to workplace spirituality self-compassion, and mindfulness. The study investigates the impact of workplace spirituality on employee mental well-being, mindfulness and self-compassion of the employees. Workplace spirituality affects mindfulness and self-compassion to a great extent, the findings show. The mental health of employees is influenced by both mindfulness and self-compassion.

Daoist practices cultivate an inner stillness, regulate the intensity of emotions, and surrender to processes of nature so as qualified to reduce stress. A key teaching of taoism is wu wei, or effortless action. The manager or teacher should not put too much pressure on the employee or student. Daoism promotes the cultivation of adaptive flexibility in our responses to change. The advanced technique of Transcendental Meditation introduced by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi allows one to access inner silence. TM practice allows the individual to remove deep stress.

Research on reflecting practices gives further evidence of establishing meditation and employee well-being. According to Plante (2010), contemplative practices are useful in supporting mental health, the regulation of emotions, and management of stress. Various professional contexts have yielded these effects. IT workers have reported improvements in mental wellbeing, self-awareness and perceived productivity after a mindfulness-based intervention. These outcomes imply that contemplative self-cultivation practices can be useful coping mechanisms.

James et al. (2024) examined workplace spirituality and stress among Indian workers. The discovered compassion, concern, meaningful work, mindfulness, and transcendence reduce workplace stress. Consequently, it appears that being spiritual and mindful may help in reaching a better psychological adjustment and better coping.

On the other hand, spiritual intelligence and ethical organizational climate help to enhance

employees' satisfaction and affective well-being. Companies give more importance to wellness programs that focus on the emotional well-being than the physical aspect of employees.

There is considerable literature on workplace spirituality and mindfulness research. However, Daoist self-cultivation is practically absent from the organizational scholarship. Most studies focus on workplace mindfulness intervention without consideration of the philosophical basis of practice (Frost, 2021). Therefore, the examined correlation of completed study seeks to study the Daoist self-cultivation and employee well-being in IT companies.

## Objectives

To study the impact of Daoism self-cultivation techniques on the wellbeing of the employees in India's IT companies.

To understand the correlation of mindfulness, emotional balance, and psychological resilience arising from Daoist self-care methods in the workplace.

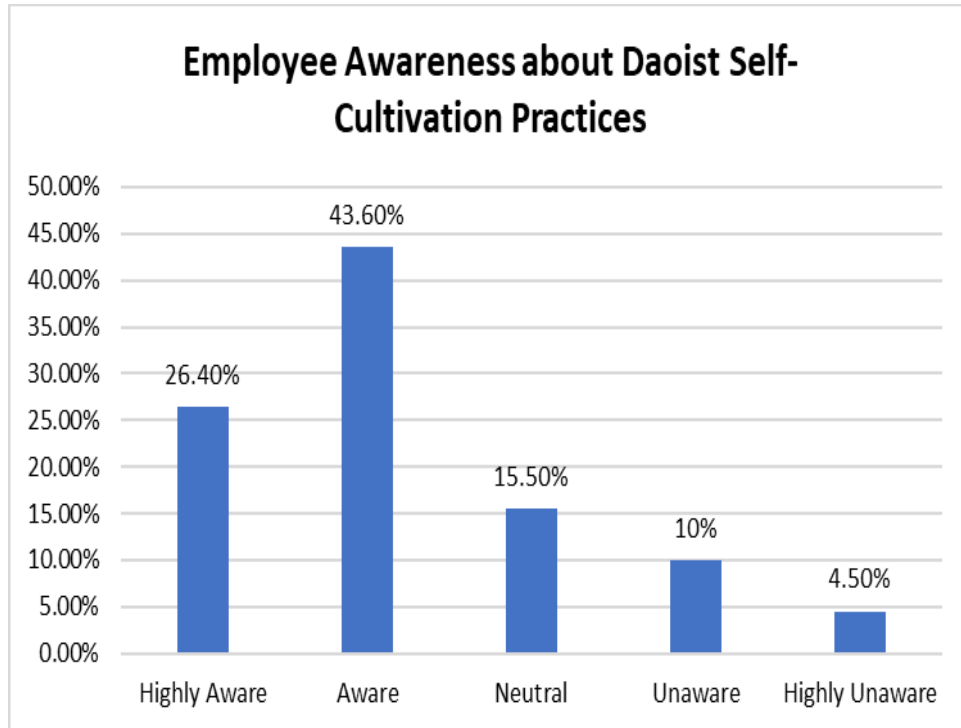
The present study aims to assess the effect of Daoist self-cultivation on uniting occupational stress and improving job satisfaction and WLB of the IT professionals in the country India.

## Methodology

The descriptive and analytical type of research design was used in the present study to gain an insight into the effect of Daoist self-cultivation on employee's well-being among Indian IT companies. Both primary data and secondary data were chosen for this study. Structured questionnaire was used to gather primary data from employees of the selected IT Companies of the major IT hubs of Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Pune, Noida in India. Participants included 220 who were selected through convenience and purposive sampling to assure that those employees would have knowledge of mindfulness, meditation or workplace wellness practices. The questions of this questionnaire focused on the activities of Daoist self-cultivation, mindfulness, emotional balance, occupational stress, psychological adaptability, job satisfaction and general well-being of the worker, with options ranging from 1 for strongly disagree to 5 for strongly agree. For secondary data, journal articles, books, conference papers, and organisationally published papers were used and mapped to aspects of workplace spirituality, Daoism, mindfulness, and employee well-being.

## Results and Analysis

The present paper has focused on the analysis and interpretation of data that were gathered from the employees of selected companies in the Indian IT sector on how the Daoist self-cultivation practices impact on the employees' wellbeing. The responses collected were systematically categorized, tabulated and analyzed using the statistical methods like percentage analysis, mean score analysis, correlation and regression. This paper seeks to explore employees' consciousness of self-cultivation techniques from a Daoistic perspective and to appraise the consequences of these practices on mindfulness, emotional resistance, stress lessening, job satisfaction and work-life balance. After analyzing the data, the interpretations offer valuable insights on the impact of contemplative and mindfulness-based practices on improving employee well-being in the Indian IT industry.



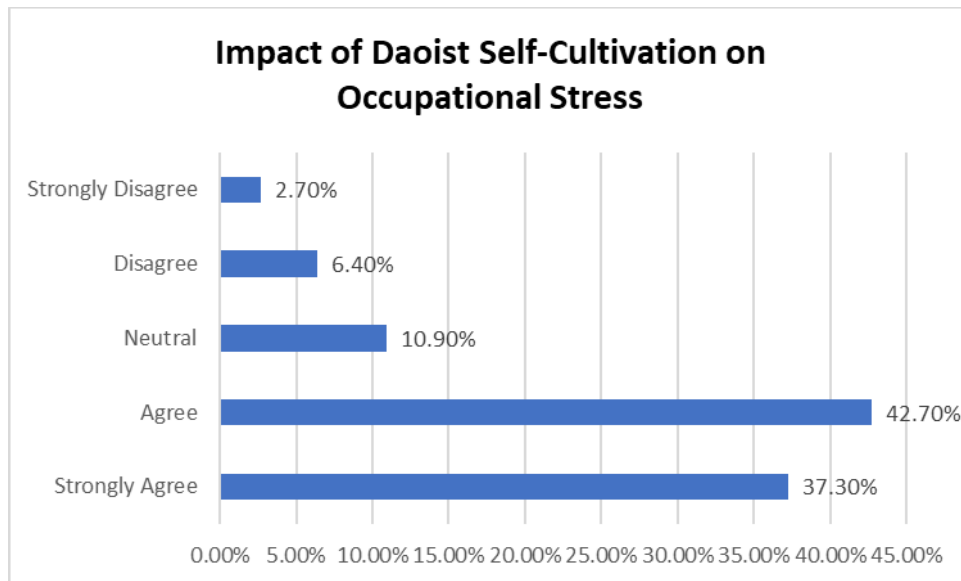
**Fig. 1 Employee Awareness about Daoist Self-Cultivation**

According to the findings in the survey 43.6% of the respondents were aware of the self-cultivation practices of Daoism. Most of the employees were unaware of these materials, while 26.4 % were highly aware of such practices. Only a small number of respondents are unaware of practices. It indicates that the IT professionals are nowadays being exposed to mind, meditation and self increasingly.

**Table 1 Mean Score Analysis of Daoist Self-Cultivation Practices**

Variables	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
Mindfulness Practice	4.12	0.71
Emotional Balance	3.98	0.76
Stress Management	4.08	0.69
Inner Calmness	4.15	0.73
Work-Life Harmony	3.94	0.81

The highest score (mean) was achieved by ‘Inner Calmness’ (4.15), followed by ‘Mindfulness Practice’ (4.12) and ‘Stress Management’ (4.08), as shown in the table below. Through the practice of self-cultivation techniques, employees were able to maintain their calmness and emotional stability and experience greater harmony at the workplace. The values for all of the variables were.



**Fig. 2 Daoist Self-Cultivation on Occupational Stress**

A glance at the above table shows that 80 percent of the respondents have either agreed or strongly agreed that the Daoist self-cultivation practice has helped reduce occupational stress. Only 9.1 percent expressed their disagreement.

**Table 2 Relationship between Daoist Self-Cultivation and Employee Well-Being**

Variables	Correlation Coefficient (r)	Significance (p-value)
Self-Cultivation and Psychological Well-Being	0.742	0.000
Self-Cultivation and Job Satisfaction	0.691	0.001
Self-Cultivation and Work-Life Balance	0.715	0.000
Self-Cultivation and Emotional Resilience	0.768	0.000

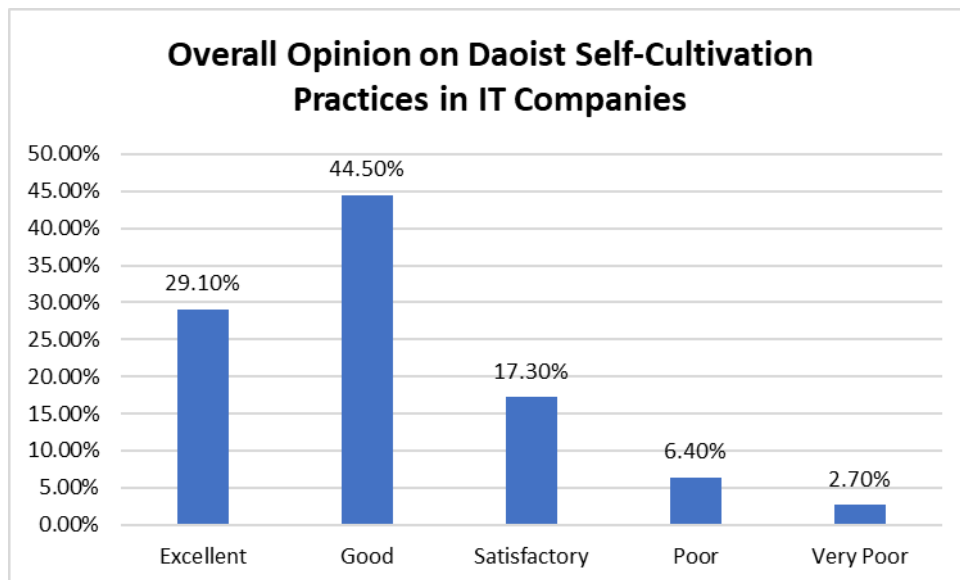
The above table displays a strong correlation in terms of Daoist self-cultivation and mental well-being among all dimensions of mental well-being. Strengthening emotional resilience significantly correlates with cultivating oneself ( $r = 0.768$ ) Mindfulness had strong relationship with psychological well-being ( $r = 0.742$ ) too. There is a significant relationship between the variables since the p-value of all the variables is less than 0.05. The results indicate that employees who practice mindfulness.

**Table 3 Regression Analysis Showing Influence of Daoist Self-Cultivation on Employee Well-Being**

Variables	Beta Value	t-value	Significance
Mindfulness Practice	0.412	6.82	0.000
Emotional Balance	0.365	5.94	0.001
Stress Reduction	0.387	6.11	0.000

Work-Life Harmony	0.298	4.87	0.003
<b>Model Summary</b>	<b>Value</b>		
R	0.781		
R <sup>2</sup>	0.610		
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.602		

The results of regression analysis indicated that all components of Daoist self-cultivation predict employee well-being significantly. Mindfulness practice exerted maximum impact; beta value was 0.412. R<sup>2</sup> value is 0.610; 61% of employee well-being is due to the variables in our Daoist self-cultivation model. Value significance of all independent variables.



The majority of people who answered it give a good rating to self cultivation activity in Daoism. About 44.5% of respondents think they are "Good" and 29.1% find it "Excellent". A minor percentage of respondents rated them as "Not Good" and "Not Sure". This indicates that.

This research paper discusses the self-cultivation practices of Daoism that can promote the well-being of IT sector employees in India. In addition, these employees who practiced mindfulness and meditation imbibed an overall reduction of stress and other traits. They displayed lesser stress, high emotional resilience, work-life balance, and job satisfaction. Statistical test results revealed a significantly positive relationship between self-cultivation and psychological well-being. The research indicates that organizations must internalize mindfulness and wellness development into their cultures for the fostering of prosaic, productive and emotionally balanced workplaces.

## Discussion

This study shows that the practices of Daoism self-cultivation have a positive effect on the well-being of employees at Indian IT companies. Results indicated workers with frequent mindfulness, self-awareness, emotional regulation, and meditation activities had lower scores on occupational stress and higher scores on psychological well-being, emotional resilience, and job satisfaction. Employees' mean

scores in the areas of inner calmness, stress management and mindfulness practices were high, indicating that contemplative approaches play a significant role in staff coping skills when dealing with workplace stresses in technologically driven workplaces.

An analysis of correlation and regression also indicated a high and statistically significant correlation between various aspects of employee well-being (work-life balance, emotional stability and psychological resilience) and Daoist self-cultivation. This aligns well with previous research on workplace spirituality and mindfulness showing that contemplative practices have beneficial effects on mental health, emotionality and organisational commitment. It also validates the Daoist philosophy that harmony and balance in the internal life actually affect the amount and quality of life of an individual.

It further uncovers the increasing incorporation of spiritual wellness practices in corporate India. In the IT world, it is becoming more and more important for employees to keep a level head, not only in a professional sense, but from the mental and emotional perspectives as well. The ongoing anecdotal evidence of the positive reception of self-cultivation practices from those engaged in meditation and mindfulness suggests that it is a possibility for organizations to incorporate mindfulness practices as well as meditation sessions and holistic well-being initiatives in their human resource strategies and contribute to enhanced crew engagement and productivity.

The findings from this study show that Daoist self-cultivation is an effective framework to support sustainable employees' well-being in modern organizations in general. Based on the results, it appears that workplaces that focus on providing a comprehensive manifestation of development and inner balance may generate healthier, more resilient and productive workplaces, particularly in industries that have high levels of stress like the IT industry in India.

## Conclusion

Based on the findings of the present study, it can be said that the practices of self-cultivation of the Daoists contributes significantly to improve employee well-being in the Indian IT companies. The results reveal that workspace emotional balance and wellness practices such as mindfulness, emotional balance, meditation, and self-awareness have a positive impact on employees' psychological well-being, stress management, emotional resilience, job satisfaction, and work-life harmony. The correlation between Daoist cultivation of self with different dimensions of employees' well-being was verified by statistical analysis and was found to be a positive strong relationship. For IT workers, who work in a competitive and high-stress environment, those who employ contemplative and mindfulness-based practices had higher levels of emotional stability, better coping skills, and greater satisfaction with their work. So based on that, it is clear that the application of the concepts of Daoism philosophy for implementing wellness practices in organizations can help to create a healthy, balanced and sustainable work environment.

## Recommendations

The results obtained from this study conclude that Indian IT organizations should adopt structured mindfulness and self-cultivation programmes to their organizational culture and employee's wellness programs. Implementing various mindful strategies through regular meditation sessions, stress management workshops, emotional wellness training, and mindfulness-based interventions is crucial for promoting mental and emotional wellness among employees. HR departments can also

promote flexible working practices, learning environments that enable reflection, and work-life balance policies based on the concept of holistic health and wellbeing. In addition, an organizational culture that is encouraging and nurturing for psychological safety, inner balance, and employee involvement should be established. Sustainable employee well-being and organizational effectiveness can also be promoted in leadership and organizational behaviour development processes at academic institutions and/or corporate trainers by incorporating Eastern philosophical methods like self-cultivation based on the Taoist philosophy as a component.

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