

SLM-02

**“Developing cardiovascular efficiency among Primary teachers through
Asanas and Mindful Meditation.”**

Action Research Report

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I. ACTION RESEARCH REPORT

1. Introduction: Teaching is renowned for its demanding working conditions. Such conditions likely have far-reaching consequences. Perhaps the most worrying of these are the potential negative effects on teachers' physical health. These effects may help explain why work absences and attrition are so apparent in the teaching profession. For these reasons, many researchers have sought to understand the factors that may underpin teachers' physical ill-health. In the current study, our aim is to examine the role of a particularly common experience for teachers — burnout — in this relationship. To do so, we extend previous work by providing the first systematic review of research examining teacher burnout and physical health consequences.

Effective Teachers:

Research suggests that work can have adverse effects on employee health across a range of occupations. Similarly, this may be the case for the teaching profession, as studies indicate that teachers are susceptible to many health consequences. This includes the development of mental health conditions (e.g., depression), but also notable and negative effects on their physical health. For example, work in this area has shown an increased incidence of somatic symptoms (e.g., headaches) and also cardiovascular diseases. Worryingly, there is also evidence that teacher health is worsening, and it is wholly likely that the COVID-19 pandemic has only exacerbated these issues even further.

There are many reasons why understanding and maintaining teacher health is so important. At its broadest, teacher ill-health likely has a large economic burden on schools, the educational system, and thereby society as a whole. This includes directly on school systems with increased classroom absences, presenteeism (e.g., working while sick), and contributions to teacher dropout (where rates exceed those typical to most professions. For teachers themselves, the effects are potentially disastrous too — not only in the short-term (with reduced work capacity, motivation, and wellbeing; but also over time in terms of chronic illness .

Burnout may also have consequences for teachers' physical health. In this regard, forwarded several theoretical pathways through which burnout may affect physical health. It is possible to use these ideas to construct a theoretical framework that applies to the teaching profession. In doing so, we posit three main ways burnout will likely inhibit teachers' physical health. First, teachers who experience frequent burnout symptoms may be likely to engage in unhealthy behaviours. This may be over eating, lack of exercise/physical activity. Such behaviours are

well-known risk factors for various physical ill-health consequences (e.g., cardiovascular disease). Second, burnout may modulate teachers' biophysiological responses to stress. For example, when presented with stressful situations, as is very common in teaching, teachers experiencing frequent burnout symptoms are less able to respond to these situations biologically. Over time, these processes have implications for disease susceptibility, especially in context of autoimmune disorders and chronic pain. Finally, burnout may compromise teachers' immune systems. When combined with aspects common for teachers (e.g., close proximity to others [classroom teaching]), it is possible that teachers who experience frequent burnout symptoms are more susceptible to infectious disease and associated symptoms. While these are unlikely to be discrete pathways, and instead act in an integrative manner, they do provide a useful basis to begin to understand the link between teacher burnout and physical health.

There is empirical evidence to support an association between burnout and physical health outside of teaching. For example, early research in this area linked burnout to specific conditions such as cardiovascular disease. Other work identified links between burnout and musculoskeletal disorders and respiratory problems. More recently, reviewing the large body of prospective work that has accrued in this area, found that burnout predicted, amongst others, hypercholesterolemia, type 2 diabetes, and musculoskeletal pain over time.

2. Background of the Action Research

Teaching is a unique role as it encompasses the weight of 20+ futures in each classroom on a daily basis. The distinct nature of this profession presents challenges that may impact the mental wellbeing for teachers. Nationwide teacher shortages have resulted in heavier workloads and more difficulty in taking time off. Many teachers experience high levels of stress within their roles, which can lead to decision fatigue and burnout. Teachers experience long workday hours which go well beyond their contractual time, which often leads to improper rest and poor work-life balance. With an array of tasks to accomplish and not enough time in the workday, the overall impact of on educator's wellbeing can be detrimental.

3. Identification of the problem

During regular school visits and classroom observations it was obviously noticed that teachers lack in physical fitness. Most of the teachers busily engaging themselves with the teaching learning process and completely ignore their well being. Even youngsters of age group 30-35 found difficult to blow balloons, and gasps while climbing up and down stair cases. Along with academic refreshers given at regular intervals the researchers felt the need for taking up a project on physical well being.

4. Need for the study

Wellbeing for teachers and mental health are not concepts to be taken lightly, as the wellbeing of the teacher is reflected in the overall classroom. Ask any teacher where their priorities lie, and the answer that follows will likely be “with their students.” This is not a problematic answer per se, as dedication to their students is part of their role as an educator. However, in a profession full of selflessness, when does the provider of education, guidance, knowledge, motivation, and emotional support, get to prioritize themselves?

Teacher wellbeing plays a crucial role in student outcomes, workplace atmosphere, retention and recruitment for generations to come, as well as health, resilience and overall ability to serve their students. As teacher shortages surge across the nation, the time to focus on wellbeing for teachers is now. For the sake of our educators, students and schools, it’s way past time to support those on the frontline of education.

Understanding Wellbeing for Teachers

In the context of teaching, wellbeing encompasses several dimensions that contribute to a teacher’s overall health, effectiveness, and job satisfaction. Here’s a breakdown of what wellbeing means for educators:

- **Emotional Wellbeing:** This involves managing stress, staying positive and feeling fulfilled in one’s role. Teachers with good emotional wellbeing are better able to handle the pressures of the job and provide emotional support to their students.
- **Physical Wellbeing:** This includes maintaining physical health through adequate rest, nutrition, and exercise. Teachers in good physical health are more likely to have the

stamina needed to handle the demands of the job, such as long hours and active classroom engagement and management

- **Mental Wellbeing:** This refers to having a healthy mental state, including the ability to handle stress, think clearly, and stay focused. Mental wellbeing allows teachers to maintain cognitive functions necessary for lesson planning, problem-solving, and effective instruction.
- **Social Wellbeing:** This involves having supportive relationships and a sense of belonging within the school community. Positive interactions with colleagues, administrators, students, and parents contribute to a social wellbeing for teachers.
- **Professional Wellbeing:** This relates to job satisfaction, feeling valued and respected, and having opportunities for professional growth and development. Teachers with high professional wellbeing are more engaged, motivated, and effective in their roles.
- **Work-Life Balance:** Achieving a balance between professional responsibilities and personal life is crucial. Teachers need time for personal interests, family, and relaxation to avoid burnout and remain effective in their roles.
- **Autonomy:** Being empowered to make decisions about teaching methods and classroom management contributes to a teacher's sense of wellbeing.

5. Statement of the Problem

Poor physical wellbeing of teachers can have detrimental effects on both teaching and learning. The impact can be significant and includes:

- **Reduced Teaching Effectiveness:** A reduction in quality of instruction may result in decreased engagement and lower productivity amongst students, which in turn can impact overall academic performance. Teachers struggling with mental wellbeing may not be able to address the diverse needs of their students, leading to gaps in learning.
- **Negative Classroom Climate:** Increased stress levels or burnout may create a more tense or less supportive classroom atmosphere, which can affect student's comfort in the classroom. High levels of stress result in teacher's having less emotional bandwidth to provide support for their students.

- **Increased Behavioral Issues:** A teacher's mental health struggles can lead to inconsistent or ineffective classroom management, potentially resulting in increased behavioral problems among students.
- **Impact on Student Wellbeing:** Students can pick up on their teacher's stress and negative emotions, which can create a sense of unease or anxiety in the classroom. Also, when teachers have limited bandwidth to provide emotional support, students may not receive the guidance they need.
- **Increased Absenteeism:** Poor wellbeing for teachers and teachers dealing with mental health challenges may have higher rates of absenteeism, which results in inconsistency in instruction. Students with teachers experiencing mental health challenges may also lack motivation to attend school, resulting in chronic absenteeism.

Developing cardiovascular efficiency among Primary teachers through Asanas and Mindful Meditation, can pave way to improve the situation.

6. Objectives of the action research

- Leads to physical and emotional well-being
- Creates mental clarity and calmness
- Relieves chronic stress pattern and sharpens concentration
- Supports weight management and boosts immunity

7. Probable causes of the problem

Teachers don't spend their time in self regulatory skills and thereby they struggle hard to cope with the emotions, stress and anxiety thereby paving way for many stress factors and fatigue. This indirectly affects their life style and makes impact in their health

8. Action Hypotheses

Interventional strategies designed will improve cardio vascular efficiency among teachers.

9. Methodology

Procedural details of the study

- Select the sample
- Online discussions on fitness
- Regular interactions during visits
- Again online meet via zoom
- Intervention workshop with an expert
- Whatsapp status to get the feedback and observe the results

The World Health Organisation describes ‘wellbeing’ as a “resource for healthy living” and “positive state of health” that is “more than the absence of an illness” and enables us to function well: psychologically, physically, emotionally and socially. In other words, wellbeing’ is described as “enabling people to develop their potential, work productively and creatively, form positive relationships with others and meaningfully contribute to the community”

The present study will improve the following

- Autonomy: the freedom to make your own decisions
- Self-acceptance: satisfaction or happiness with oneself. This includes an awareness of one’s strengths and weaknesses. It results in an individual feeling that they are of “unique worth”.
- Mastery: the ability to manage everyday situations.
- Positive relationships with family, friends or others.
- A sense of purpose or meaning in life.
- Personal growth: facing challenges that are manageable and lead to developing new skills or becoming a better person.

School’s Role in Supporting Wellbeing for Teachers

As a teacher’s place of work, schools play a vital role in supporting teacher wellbeing. Supporting faculty wellbeing can present itself as a variety of initiatives, ranging from fostering positive workplace relationships to ensuring the availability of mental health resources.

Promoting a culture of wellbeing specifically the wellbeing for teachers require targeted strategies that address their unique needs and challenges. Much of this responsibility falls on the

school's administration and leadership. Some approaches that school leadership can employ to foster a thriving work atmosphere include:

- **Create a Supportive Environment:** Foster an environment where teachers feel valued, supported, and heard. Recognize teacher's efforts and achievements to help them feel valued and supported, and create opportunities for them to express their needs and concerns.
- **Provide Professional Development:** Offer training and workshops focused on stress management, resilience, and self-care. Ensure that professional development also includes practical strategies for managing classroom stress and workload.
- **Encourage Work-Life Balance:** Implement policies that promote work-life balance, such as flexible scheduling, reduced paperwork, and support for taking personal time off.
- **Manage Workload:** Help manage teachers' workloads by providing adequate planning time, reducing unnecessary administrative tasks, and ensuring that class sizes are manageable.
- **Recognize and Address Burnout:** Be proactive in identifying signs of burnout and stress among teachers. Create a wellbeing for teachers supportive environment where teachers feel comfortable discussing their struggles and seeking help.
- **Create a Positive Work Culture:** Develop a positive and inclusive school culture where teachers feel a sense of belonging and purpose. Promote open communication, respect, and a focus on collective goals.

While school-based leadership has the responsibility to ensure that their schools foster a culture of wellbeing for their employees, the same responsibility shifts to district and state-wide leadership. The same approaches implemented on a school by school basis can be taken county or even state-wide. In addition to this, mental health initiatives should be encouraged and provided on a larger scale. Many districts and states have implemented such initiatives for students, but have not done the same for educators. As the frontline in every classroom, teachers deserve the same mental health resources as students. In fact, given the effects of poor teacher mental health on students, it could be argued that teacher mental health is foundational for student mental health and wellbeing.

a. Sample

20 SGTs from Valapady Block form the sample of the study.

b. Research Design

Pre test experimental post test design

c. Description of Research Tool

Cooper 12-minute run/walk test to assess cardiovascular fitness.

Candle test procedure.

The Cooper 12-minute run /walk test is a common exercise test used to assess cardiovascular fitness. The cooper test is a 12- minute run test is a basic test is a basic test used by coaches, trainers, and athletes to assess current fitness levels and to track training progress. It's a timed test wherein you run far as possible in the 12-minute timeframe. A good Cooper tests score depends on your age and sex. For males aged 20 to 29, 2400 meters is above average. For females the same age, over 2200 meters is above average.

How to Perform the Cooper Test

The Cooper test requires the person being tested to run or walk as far as possible in a 12-minute period. The objective of the test is to measure the maximum distance covered by the individual during the 12-minute period and is usually carried out on a running track by placing cones at various distances to enable measuring of the distance.

A stopwatch is required for ensuring that the individual runs for the correct amount of time. Here are some factors to keep in mind when performing the Cooper 12-minute run test:

- **Distance:** Record the total number of miles or kilometers you traveled in 12 minutes.
- **Equipment:** You'll need a timer to know when 12 minutes are up. Note that some running watches and fitness monitors have a 12-minute fitness test mode.

- **Location:** This test is designed to be conducted on a track with clearly marked distance. You can perform the test on a treadmill, but be sure to raise the incline to one degree to simulate outdoor running.
- **Safety:** This is a strenuous fitness test and it's recommended that you have your physician's clearance before performing this test on your own.
- **Speed:** When you are warmed up, get going. Run or walk as far as you can in 12 minutes.
- **Warm-up:** Perform a short warm-up of 10 to 15 minutes of low to moderately strenuous activity before performing any fitness testing.

How to Perform a Cooper Run Test

1. Warm up with some light jogging and dynamic movements.
2. On a flat, hard surface, ideally, a 400-meter track, mark a clear starting point. You should know the distance you will travel by completing one lap or back and forth to the starting point. If on a track, keep in the same lane for the test duration.
3. Start a stopwatch at the same time you begin running.
4. Count each lap you complete.
5. Stop after 12 minutes, recording how many laps you achieved.
6. Walk to cool down for 10 minutes.

Cooper Test Result Rankings

Instead of using the calculation and getting your cardio vascular efficiency, you can use the distance you achieved to find how your rate.

Age	Excellent	Above Average	Average	Below Average	Poor	
Male 20-29	over 2800 meters	2400-2800 meters	2200-2399 meters	1600-2199 meters	under 1600 meters	
Females 20-29	over 2700 meters	2200-2700 meters	1800-2199 meters	1500-1799 meters	under 1500 meters	
Males 30-39	over 2700 meters	2300-2700 meters	1900-2299 meters	1500-1999 meters	under 1500 meters	

Females 30-39	over meters	2500	2000-2500 meters	1700-1999 meters	1400-1699 meters	under meters	1400
Males 40-49	over meters	2500	2100-2500 meters	1700-2099 meters	1400-1699 meters	under meters	1400
Females 40-49	over meters	2300	1900-2300 meters	1500-1899 meters	1200-1499 meters	under meters	1200
Males 50	over meters	2400	2000-2400 meters	1600-1999 meters	1300-1599 meters	under meters	1300
Females 50	over meters	2200	1700-2200 meters	1400-1699 meters	1100-1399 meters	under meters	1100

There is also an online auto calculator available in websites which shows the result when we enter sex, age and distance covered. The cardio efficiency is qualitatively assessed and verbal descriptions were given as poor, average, above average, excellent.

To improve cooper run test results, work on building your cardio vascular efficiency. Higher scores are can be attained by participating in endurance sports, especially cycling, rowing, distance running,. Training can increase and improve your run test results, but keep in mind genetics, nutrition, sleep, and other factors contribute to results as well.

Candle Breathing

Candle breathing is a simple mindfulness technique that can help young learners in lots of different ways. If you like, you can read on to find out more.

First things first, candle breathing has lots of different names. Some people call it “candle blowing”, whereas others call it the “calm down cupcake”, but they all mean the same thing. At its heart, it’s one of the many mindfulness breathing techniques available to parents, teachers and children. And, like the others, it’s intended to help us calm down by staying in the moment.

As the name suggests, candle breathing involves a simple visualisation technique, which is one of the reasons it's so popular - it can be followed easily by children of all ages. If you're curious, then here's how you can get started:

1. Make sure you're sitting upright and comfortably.
2. Put one hand on your chest, and take a deep breath in.
3. Now, imagine that there's a candle or birthday cake in front of you. As you're breathing out, you have to try and blow out all the candles.
4. Repeat as many times as you like.

Despite being such a straightforward exercise, candle breathing has a lot of benefits, which makes it well worth your time. These include the following:

- It can help to relax if feeling stressed. It does this by lowering the breathing and heart rate.
- When practised before bed, mindfulness exercises like candle breathing can help get to sleep.
- As we've mentioned, candle breathing is an easy-to-follow technique that doesn't require any special equipment or training. This makes it ideal for use by teachers, students and parents.

Beyond mindfulness, candle breathing can also be a great warm-up exercise to try in your Music or singing lessons. That's because it helps get the diaphragm ready for the deep breathing that comes with singing. Deep breathing can also help the body prepare for physical activity, so you might want to try exercises like this one.

Wellbeing is about our health and happiness. It could be physical, mental, emotional, or social wellbeing. It might include being happy with how our life is going, feeling like our life has a purpose, and having effective strategies to cope with stress and worry, such as breathing exercises.

There are lots of things that might have an impact on our wellbeing, such as negative relationships, too much social media, poor diet, lack of exercise, and more.

To improve wellbeing, you could try:

- Exercising
- Drinking water
- Connecting with family and friends
- Getting enough sleep
- Mindfulness exercises
- Gratitude

d. Description of Research Process

- **Data Collection** : Initially the teacher's views were obtained using questionnaire related to their fitness they had .
- **Intervention** : After this as a process of intervention a workshop was organized and their fitness was tested in entry level using a cooper walk test and candle blow assessment. 5 online sessions and orientation, follow up through whatsapp and zoom meet discussions were given. Later after series of orientations, which happened for 6 weeks, the cardio efficiency had a significant improvement.

10. Analysis and Interpretation

Pre-test

A pre-test was conducted in order to test their cardiovascular efficiency.

The test was conducted for an hour.

The items were evaluated and scores were taken as such for getting their efficiency. The following statistical procedures was employed to derive the findings of the study: Mean

TABLE 1**Table showing the Pre/Post scores**

S.No.	Scores			
	Pre-walk(m)	Post-walk(m)	Number of candles blown before	Number of candles blown after
1	1016	1100	4	6
2	1220	1320	6	8
3	1225	1300	6	8
4	1175	1230	0	4
5	1250	1350	8	9
6	900	1100	2	5
7	1225	1340	5	8
8	1620	1700	6	8
9	1225	1280	7	9
10	1965	2100	5	8
11	1310	1370	6	9
12	1010	1200	3	6
13	890	950	2	6
14	1245	1300	5	7
15	1275	1320	6	9
16	1480	1590	6	7
17	1965	2100	8	9
18	1245	1420	7	9
19	1020	1320	6	8
20	1725	1900	7	9
Mean	1299	1414	105	121

11. Findings of the Action Research

The data analysis of the Mean scores of the Pre-test and the Post-test enabled the investigator to arrive at the following findings:

There is a significant difference between the Mean score of the Pre-test and the Post-test. It is found that the Pre-test Mean score, which is 1299 has increased to 1414 in the post test. the difference in the mean score is 115m , a marginal improvement. This shows that the intervention shows a significant difference among their performances. As this is purely physical fitness test, the remarkable differences will be obtained only after continuous practice and it takes time . The researcher has sensitized the teachers regarding their efficiency with respect to cardio vascular and made them to realize the need to pick up yoga and other wellbeing practices.

The number of candles blown initially was less. After intervention the area covered when they were asked to walk and number of balloons they blown is directly proportional. This shows that cardio vascular efficiency shows an improvement.

12. Net gain of the Action Research

The study portrays the following core concepts in well being of teachers:

The cooper walk test made them to realise their potential and cardio efficiency, how well they can walk without any rigidity. After the candle blow test they came to know their blowing capacity. With these things as inputs , the sessions were designed with asanas, mindful meditation and exercises to warm up. The importance of walking and stretching exercises were discussed and they were made to get habituated throughout the intervention process. Teachers shared their pictures and clarified their doubts regarding the poses and asanas through whatsapp.

Many ways to develop mindfulness can help us to lead a better life. Mindfulness helps teachers to understand their own emotions better. Practicing mindfulness can help teachers to recognize our emotional patterns and proactively regulate how they behave, responding in the way they want to rather than reacting automatically. It can also help them to savor the positive moments in their job—when they feel the joy of true connection with their students or resonate with the joy and excitement their students feel .

Mindfulness helps them communicate more effectively with students

- Mindfulness helps to manage students
- Mindfulness helps to set up a positive learning environment
- Mindfulness helps to strengthen their relationship with students

13. Educational Implications of the Action Research

Teachers' mental health and well-being in education play crucial roles not only in their own lives but also in the lives of their students. Research has shown that there are associations between teacher wellbeing and student wellbeing and psychological distress. The mental health of teachers can impact students directly, with poor mental well-being potentially affecting the mental well-being of their students. Additionally, teacher presenteeism, where teachers are present at work but not fully functioning due to health issues, may involve the causal pathway between teacher and student mental health

This study revealed that teacher effectiveness could encourage the effect of job resources on teacher well-being by enhancing their efficacy and level of optimism. Therefore, academic stakeholders are required to draw their attention to the plan and application of efficient training programs. Moreover, by boosting optimism in teacher training programs, comprehensive instructive schemes should be conducted in a way to improve the level of well-being of novice and professional teachers. It also lessens their stress and certifies them to feel pleased and to remain engaged in their career.

The teachers with the more intellectual optimistic level are more likely to define the direction as delivered in their workplace in a planned design, which concentrates on the aspirations of the school. Truly, optimists are more inclined to take advantage of dynamic coping approaches and keep their work.

14. Recommendations

- Continuous professional development is essential for teachers to stay updated with the latest teaching methods and to build their confidence. Regular training programs can help teachers manage classroom challenges more effectively, reduce stress, and improve job satisfaction. For example, providing workshops on stress management and classroom management techniques can equip teachers with the skills they need to handle their daily tasks more efficiently.
- Mental health services and support: Access to mental health services, such as counseling and therapy, is vital for teachers to manage stress and mental health issues. Schools should provide these services to support teachers' mental well-being. Establishing partnerships with mental health professionals and creating in-school counseling services can offer teachers the support they need.
- Encouraging a healthy work-life balance is crucial for teachers' mental health. Schools can implement flexible working hours, reduce workload, and ensure adequate rest periods to help teachers balance their professional and personal lives. Allowing teachers to have more control over their schedules and workload can significantly reduce stress levels.
- Creating a supportive school environment where teachers feel valued and respected can enhance their job satisfaction and mental health. This includes fostering a culture of appreciation and collaboration among staff. Regular team-building activities and recognition of teachers' achievements can contribute to a more positive work atmosphere.
- The development of peer support networks and mentorship programs provides teachers with emotional support and practical advice, helping them navigate challenges more effectively. Mentorship programs can pair experienced teachers with newer teachers to offer guidance and support.
- The implementation of mindfulness and stress reduction programs can help teachers develop coping mechanisms to address stress and anxiety. These programs can be incorporated into the school schedule to ensure regular practice. Techniques such as meditation, yoga, and deep-breathing exercises can be beneficial.
- Encouraging teachers to engage in regular physical activity and providing resources for a healthy lifestyle can significantly improve their mental health. Schools can offer fitness

programs and promote healthy eating habits. Regular physical activity can reduce stress, improve mood, and increase overall health. Orientation regarding mindfulness, good life style and habits can contribute to their fitness.

15. Conclusion

From the above it is cleared that teaching profession is very impetus for creating a best nation. For this teacher effectiveness is most important factor which can be enhanced through psychological and physical well being for optimal functioning. Having a feeling of satisfaction in life, effective functioning, positive relations with world and society can ensure positive progress, with the sign of healthy life style.

The health and well-being of schoolteachers are crucial aspects that significantly impact the overall school environment and student outcomes. It plays a crucial role in creating a positive educational atmosphere, significantly influencing both the lives of educators and the academic success of their students. It is important to understand the complex connections between teachers' health, their relationships with students, and the overall school environment to develop effective support systems. To improve teachers' cardio efficiency as a part of their physical health , a comprehensive approach is required. This should include mindfulness and asanas training, ongoing professional development, and the creation of supportive school environments. Such measures can empower teachers to gain a deeper understanding of health issues and foster a culture of support and inclusivity within their schools. Moreover, building strong social networks among teachers and the wider community can greatly enhance their awareness of physical and mental health and their ability to cope with challenges.

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Annexure-1

Research Tool

- Cooper 12-minute run/walk test to assess cardiovascular fitness.
- Candle test procedure.

Annexure-2

Photos







