



Yoga and Teacher's Health: A NEP 2020 Approach

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Abstract:

Teaching is a highly demanding profession where educators face multiple challenges, including heavy administrative responsibilities, adapting to new technology, continuous assessment of students, and managing their socio-emotional needs. These factors often lead to stress, fatigue, and emotional exhaustion, affecting teachers' health and teaching efficiency. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 recognizes teachers as the backbone of the education system and emphasizes their holistic well-being and professional competence. Yoga, a traditional mind-body practice promoted by the Ministry of AYUSH, can play a crucial role in helping teachers cope with these challenges. This paper describes common problems faced by teachers and explains how yoga can help them maintain physical health, emotional balance, and mental clarity, making their professional tasks easier and more effective. Incorporating yoga into teacher training programs can create healthier, happier, and more productive educators.

Keywords: Teacher wellness, Yoga, NEP 2020, Stress management, Holistic education, Teacher training

Introduction:

Teachers have one of the most responsible jobs in society. They are not only required to teach academic content but also to guide students socially and emotionally. In today's fast-changing educational environment, teachers face several challenges:

- **Heavy administrative workload:** Filling forms, preparing reports, and completing official tasks often takes time away from teaching.
- **Adapting to technology:** Digital classrooms, online assessments, and e-learning platforms demand new skills.
- **Continuous student evaluation:** Teachers are required to monitor academic performance, behavior, and emotional well-being continuously.
- **Managing diverse emotional needs:** Students have varied backgrounds and challenges; teachers must support them emotionally while maintaining classroom

discipline. These challenges often lead to **stress**, burnout, physical fatigue, and mental exhaustion, which reduce teaching effectiveness and job satisfaction. NEP 2020 emphasizes holistic teacher development and recommends wellness programs, such as yoga and mindfulness, to support teachers' physical, mental, and emotional health.

Yoga, combining physical postures (asanas), breathing exercises (pranayama), meditation, and mindfulness, addresses these challenges. Regular yoga practice helps teachers manage stress, improve focus, increase energy, and maintain emotional stability, making their work easier and more effective.

Method:

This study is based on a qualitative review of policy documents, including NEP 2020, NCERT publications, and Ministry of AYUSH guidelines, along with relevant research literature on yoga, mindfulness, and teacher wellness. The

analysis focuses on how yoga practices such as asana, pranayama, and meditation support stress management, emotional regulation, and professional resilience among teachers.

Teachers' Problems in Daily Work:

- **Workload and Time Pressure:** Teachers often have to manage a large number of students, plan lessons, complete administrative work, and meet deadlines. This high workload leads to physical tiredness, headaches, and reduced energy for teaching.

How Yoga Helps:

- Gentle stretching and asanas relieve back pain, neck stiffness, and muscle tension caused by prolonged sitting or standing.
- Breathing exercises (pranayama) increase oxygen flow, reduce fatigue, and improve stamina.
- **Stress and Mental Fatigue:** Teachers experience mental stress due to high expectations, handling classroom conflicts, and managing students' emotional needs. Continuous stress can lead to anxiety, irritability, and lack of concentration.

How Yoga Helps:

- Meditation and mindfulness practices calm the mind and reduce anxiety.
- Regular yoga lowers stress hormone (cortisol) levels and promotes emotional stability.
- Mindful awareness helps teachers respond calmly to challenging situations in the classroom.
- **Emotional Exhaustion and Burnout:** Dealing with students' behavior, parents' expectations, and institutional demands can emotionally drain teachers. Emotional exhaustion may lead to decreased motivation and lower teaching quality.

How Yoga Helps:

- Yoga and meditation enhance emotional resilience and patience.
- Teachers learn to manage their emotions, preventing burnout.
- A calmer and balanced mind improves teacher-student relationships and classroom climate.
- **Physical Health Issues:** Prolonged standing, sitting, and repetitive work often lead to physical ailments such as back pain, joint stiffness, headaches, and fatigue. Poor health affects energy levels and teaching efficiency.

How Yoga Helps:

- Regular asanas improve flexibility, posture, and overall fitness.
- Yoga strengthens immunity and reduces physical discomfort.
- Increased energy allows teachers to manage long workdays effectively.
- **Cognitive Challenges:** Teachers must plan lessons, assess students, solve problems, and make quick decisions during classroom activities. Mental clutter and stress can reduce concentration and clarity.

How Yoga Helps:

- Meditation and mindfulness improve attention, focus, and memory.
- Yoga enhances cognitive flexibility, helping teachers adapt to new challenges.
- Reflective thinking encouraged by yoga improves problem-solving and classroom management.

Yoga and Teacher Wellness:

Yoga provides a **simple, practical, and effective way** to address these daily challenges. Regular practice improves:

1. **Physical Wellness:** Reduces fatigue, prevents injuries, improves stamina, and maintains energy levels.
2. **Mental Wellness:** Reduces stress, promotes calmness, and improves focus.

3. **Emotional Wellness:** Builds patience, emotional resilience, and positive interactions with students.
4. **Cognitive Skills:** Enhances decision-making, reflective teaching, and adaptability. Incorporating yoga into daily routines or school schedules allows teachers to stay healthy, manage stress, and perform better professionally.

Strategies for Integrating Yoga for Teachers:

- **Pre-service Training:** Yoga modules should be mandatory in B.Ed. D.Ed., and other teacher education programs.
- **In-service Workshops:** Schools can conduct regular yoga and mindfulness sessions or online training for teachers.
- **Daily Practice:** Short yoga sessions during breaks or before classes can refresh teachers physically and mentally.
- **Wellness Clubs:** Teacher groups can practice together, share experiences, and motivate each other.
- **Institutional Support:** NCERT and Ministry of AYUSH can provide guidelines, resources, and standardized programs.

Additional suggestions include online yoga classes, wellness assessments, and customized programs based on teachers' needs.

Discussion:

Teachers who practice yoga regularly report lower stress, higher energy, better focus, and improved classroom management. Schools that integrate yoga and mindfulness programs experience higher teacher satisfaction, reduced absenteeism, and better student engagement. Yoga does not only benefit teachers' health but also creates a positive learning environment for students. NEP 2020 emphasizes holistic education, and promoting yoga among teachers directly supports this vision. By addressing physical, mental, and emotional challenges

through yoga, teachers can perform their duties more efficiently, feel motivated, and maintain long-term well-being.

Conclusion:

Yoga is a practical, culturally relevant, and effective intervention to improve teacher wellness. It helps teachers:

- Manage stress and burnout
- Improve physical health and energy
- Enhance mental clarity and emotional balance
- Perform classroom duties more effectively

Incorporating yoga into pre-service and in-service teacher training aligns with NEP 2020's holistic vision. With institutional support from NCERT and the Ministry of AYUSH, structured yoga programs can help create healthy, motivated, and competent teachers, positively impacting the entire education system.

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