

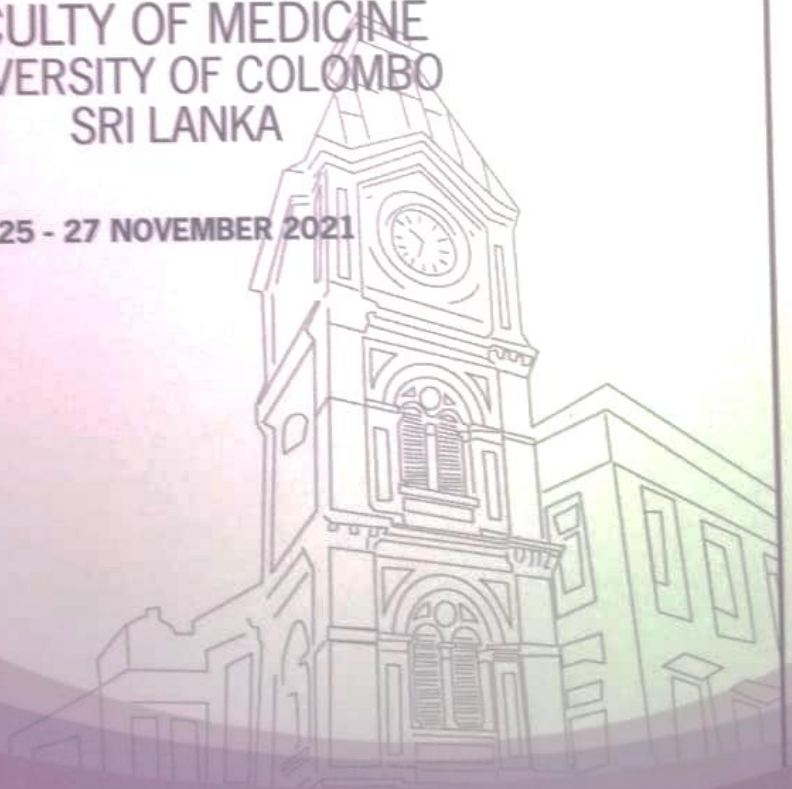


**"NCD AND COVID 19: TACKLING TWO PANDEMICS THROUGH COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH"**

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PP-28: A Qualitative Study on the Perceived Impact of Mindfulness Meditation on Teacher Immunity to Workplace Stressors

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**Introduction:** The profession of teaching is considered to involve constant exposure to stressors on a daily basis. Teacher immunity is a theoretical construct that encompasses aspects such as teaching self-efficacy, burnout, resilience, attitudes to teaching, openness to change, classroom affectivity and coping; it provides insight into the question of how teachers survive and thrive despite experiences of emotional upheaval and threats to psychological well-being. This study sought to explore the impact of mindfulness meditation on 'teacher immunity to workplace stressors.'

**Methods:** This qualitative research inquiry utilized a blend of narrative and case study methodologies, which allowed the researchers to co-construct, with the participants, a 'storied' understanding of the impact of mindfulness meditation in shaping their teacher immunity to workplace stressors. Five participants were recruited followed by an intake interview to screen skilled meditators. Other selection criteria were being teachers with a minimum of two years of experience working on permanent basis in Sri Lankan government schools, and not being on long-term leave when data were collected. Data generation was done through an in-depth interview with each participant.

**Results:** Results of the study indicate that the participants responded to stressful events at work through problem-focused coping strategies such as defining the problem, weighing alternatives in terms of their cost and benefits and making suitable remedial action. They perceived regular practice of meditation to have improved their ability to regulate their emotions, address career challenges, and treat students with sympathy and loving-kindness. They also experienced that, as a result of practising mindfulness meditation, they were able to face stressful events at work with equanimity and tolerance, and concentrate on their work despite the stressor.

**Conclusions:** Regular practice of mindfulness meditation has the potential to help teachers to respond to workplace stressors in ways that would benefit their psychological well-being.

**Keywords:** teacher immunity to workplace stressors, narrative case study, mindfulness meditation

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