Hornby Educational Trust

Teacher Research in South India

India

2022-2023 Alumni Project Report

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Hornby Alumni Projects

Project Overview

Title	Teacher Research in South India
Country	India
Dates of project	2022-2023

1.Background and rationale

What are the main issues in your English teaching and learning context? How did these issues influence your choice of project? Were there also other important contextual factors to consider?

Teachers attending in-service teacher training programmes at the Regional Institute of English South India (RIESI) for 30 days carry out teacher research (exploratory action research) as part of the programme. They explore various classroom issues, puzzles and problems, analyse the reasons, prepare an action plan during the 30-day Certificate course and conduct action research in their classrooms after the completion of the training. They are encouraged to write exploratory action research reports and also to present papers at state, national and international level seminars and conferences. More than a 1000 teachers have carried out teacher research in the past four years.

It is important to publish some of the best reports as RIESI is the only institute in India that offers long-term in-service training programmes to primary and secondary school teachers. It is a unique training programme that integrates teacher research into the curriculum and helps teachers transform themselves as teacher researchers and reflective practitioners. Some of these teacher researchers act as master trainers and conduct sessions on teacher research at the state and district-level training programmes offered by the Department of Education. They continue to act as mentors and share their mentoring experiences during refresher courses held at RIESI.

However, these practices and classroom-based research studies are not shared widely. It will help the state Departments to make policy decisions if such teacher research reports are published and shared with ELT practitioners across the country.

The published book, with audio and video links, will be used as an Open Educational Resource to train teacher educators and mentor teacher researchers at the district as well as block levels thereby scaling the project.

2. Project objectives

By the end of this project, participants should be able to:

1. disseminate teacher research findings to the wider audience

2. publish teacher research reports online and in print to make them accessible to teachers, teacher educators and policy makers across the country

3. train teacher educators to mentor teachers at the district/block levels to conduct teacher research

4. motivate teacher educators at the District Institutes of Teacher Education (DIETs) to use the published book for teacher research mentoring

5. influence policy decisions and curriculum design initiatives at state and national levels

6. encourage teacher educators to integrate exploratory action research into their pre- and in-service teacher education curricula

Evaluation

1. Project objectives

To what extent do you feel your objectives were met? If they were not met, or only partially met, can you explain why?

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Major objectives of the project were achieved. However, it was not possible to achieve two of the objectives namely (i) influencing policy decisions and curriculum design initiatives at state and national levels and (ii) encouraging teacher educators to integrate exploratory action research into their pre- and in-service teacher education curricula. These are long-term goals and probably could be achieved if the project is continued for one or two more years.

Teacher research reports were compiled, edited and were published as a booklet which was released during the teacher education programme. Copies of the booklet were widely circulated among teachers as well as teacher educators in two of the southern states in India namely Karnataka and Kerala.

The teacher research booklet was uploaded to the official website of the Institute (https://www.riesi.ac.in/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/CELT-September-2023-Batch-4-Teacher-research-reports.pdf) and was also uploaded on an international forum for teacher research mentoring (https://mentoring-tr.weebly.com/uploads/7/3/1/6/7316005/celt_september_2023_batch_4_teacher_research_reports.pdf)

One Teacher Educator from each District Institute of Teacher Education (DIETs) was invited for a workshop on mentoring teachers to conduct Exploratory Action Research. 35 teacher educators got benefitted from the workshop, mentored at least one teacher from their district, analysed the effect of exploratory action research on classroom teaching and student learning.

Further efforts are needed to integrate exploratory action research into the pre- and in-service teacher education curricula in the respective DIETs and at the state level.

2. Project impact

What was the impact of your project on:

a) you
b) your Association(s) / Institution(s)?
c) the people involved in your project?
d) the wider community?

What evidence do you have to demonstrate this?

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The project motivated me to mentor teachers to do classroom-based research in large scale. I have now made exploratory action research an integral part of the in-service teacher education curriculum at the Institute. The project helped me to bring some innovative practices in to in-service teacher training programmes and contributed to my professional development.

At the institutional level, it has been decided to mentor teachers to carry out exploratory action research in all the future training programmes. The compiled report was submitted to the Director of State Educational Research and Training (DSERT) in order to include teacher research component in pre-service teacher education curriculum.

Teacher educators have visited schools, observed classrooms and interacted with teachers who have carried out exploratory action research as part of the Hornby project. They have also prepared short reports sharing how teacher led research brings transformation in the classrooms and improves student learning.

A few teachers who were part of the project presented their exploratory action research reports in an international conference organised by the All India Network of English Teachers (AINET) and held at Guwahati, India. One of them received an outstanding presentation award as well (https://drive.google.com/file/d/1xf56AYh9YRy7nlNg2OwMqKKa94UU6P2e/view?usp=drive_link)

Four of the teachers made presentations in an online webinar organised by the IATEFL Research SIG on 9th and 10th March 2024. (https://docs.google.com/document/d/17jwKhJbHkvplbmAQfQwpnJOWdn0qqayO/edit)

The project will have an everlasting impact on the professional lives of teachers who will continue to explore classroom issues, reflect on the challenges and think of possible ways of addressing them. Teachers have gained confidence in writing classroom research reports and disseminating the best classroom practices to a wider audience.

3. Sharing with a wider audience

Who did you share information about the project with? Why, when, and how did you do this?
What reactions did you get?
Do you have any further plans for sharing more widely?

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A presentation was made before the Commissioner of School Education, Government of Karnataka about the value of conducting Exploratory Action Research and the importance of teacher research mentoring in this regard. A copy of the report was shared with the Director of State Educational Research and Training, Government of Karnataka. The effect of carrying out this project in bringing out classroom innovations was also shared with the Nodal Officer for English, Department of General Education, Government of Kerala. The responses from all the stakeholders were positive.

The compiled report was shared with Professor Richard Smith, Warwick University who has uploaded the report on the teacher research mentoring website. The report is thus made accessible to wider international audience.

4. Overall reflections

As a result of planning, implementing, and disseminating the project, what did you learn about:
   a) organising / managing a project?
   b) the strengths / weaknesses and future needs of your TA(s) /Institution(s) and / or working context?

Would you do anything differently next time?
Would you like to suggest anything to another alumni planning to undertake a similar project?

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Though the title of the project was 'Teacher Research in South India', I could involve teachers only from two states namely Karnataka and Kerala. In future, I need to involve teachers from the other three states namely Andhra Pradesh, Taminadu and Telangana.

Project could have been executed in a better fashion if all the stakeholders participated actively throughout the project management process. Better collaboration between the RIESI and the DIETs would have yielded better results.

Teacher research initiatives are sustainable if the teacher educators at the district level i.e. in respective DIETs show genuine interest, more involvement and coordination between the DIETs and schools.

Next time, it would be useful to encourage mentors (i.e. teacher educators at the DIETs) to share their mentoring experiences and write reflective reports which can be shared with a wider audience.

5. Next steps

How do you plan to continue and / or build on what has been achieved through this project? Why? How might you begin?

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It may be useful to conduct a dissemination event at the end of a project. The event could be an experiencing session workshop, poster presentations, seminar or a webinar conducted at the state level. Next time, I would begin the project by conducting a workshop on teacher research mentoring for teacher educators in the first place. These teacher educators can be made more responsible for mentoring at least five teachers in their districts to carry out exploratory action research. DIETs can be given the responsibility of continuing this project and implementing it at scale.

Permissions

This report is primarily for the Hornby Trustees and British Council internal review and records. However, we do want to promote your hard work and would like to share what you have done with other Hornby awardees and publicly via the Internet.

☐ √ Can you please tick here if you give your permission to share your report?

☐ √Please tick here if you would like your project to be considered for presentation at the 2025 IATEFL conference (the Hornby Trust will select from reports submitted and will support one team member from each of these projects to attend the conference).

Please indicate who would give the presentation if selected:

Click or tap here to enter text. Ravinarayan Chakrakodi

Ravinarayan Chakrakodi

Name: Ravinarayan Chakrakodi   Click or tap here to enter text.

Date: 14 May 2024   Click or tap here to enter text.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Expenditure

Were there any **significant differences** from your planned budget? By significant we mean you spent far more than planned, or you were given a donation from a partner that was not expected, for example.

Note any costs below that exceeded the original budget by £200 (below this amount does not need including). Please also tell us what caused these changes in the *Reflection* section below the two tables.

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a. local funding

Description	Breakdown	Total cost	Final cost
Training teacher educators to mentor teachers to do teacher research	Accommodation cost - £500 Cost for food - £500	£1000	
Totals:		**1000**	

b. Hornby funding

Description	Breakdown	Total cost	Final cost
Conducting webinars and collecting teacher research reports with audios/videos	Online meetings: platform, internet charges, etc - £100		
01-day face-to-face meeting - Feedback on the reports, editing and revising the reports	Travel and food - £200		
DTP work, cover page design	Formatting, typeset, layout, etc - £100		

Final editing, proofreading, printing hard copies, etc.	Online, internet, phone calls and printing charges - £200		
Total cost for printing the reports	£600	£600	
Training teacher educators to mentor teachers to do teacher research – 03 day workshop	Travel cost - £500 Training cost (stationery, venue, projectors, etc) - £300	£900	
Totals:		1500	

Reflections:

Please share your thoughts here:

Appendix 2: Planned activity

Review your planned activity below and then reflect on any changes that were needed and explain why these were necessary.

Dates	Description of activities	Duration
15 February to 30 March, 2023	Conducting webinars and collecting teacher research reports with audios/videos	1 ½ months
15 April to 2023 to 15 June 2023	Feedback on the reports, editing and revising the reports	2 months
16 June to 30 July 2023	Submission of the final reports	1 ½ months
01 August to 30 September 2023	DTP work, cover page design	2 months
30 September to 30 October 2023	Final editing, proofreading, etc.	1 month
November 2023	Publication and release of the reports	1 month
December 2023 to February 2024	Workshop: Training teacher educators (35 in number) for 03 days to mentor teachers to do teacher research	3 months

Reflections:

Please share your thoughts here: