

PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH (PAR) GUIDE FOR SCHOOL WELLBEING

A guide for implementing participatory action research (PAR) in the daily life of educational institutions, especially kindergartens, primary and secondary schools.

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Introduction

This guide is a combination of theoretical background, international experience, and recommendations for the implementation of Participatory Action Research (PAR) in the everyday life of educational institutions from kindergarten, primary and secondary schools. It includes information about the project, a definition of teachers' professional well-being as an important predictor of job satisfaction and job persistence. Further, an explanation of PAR as a modern form of participatory research that understands the power of professional knowledge is provided, whereby teachers are seen as the best experts on their professional lives, and at the end, some international implementation issues and suggestions on how to conduct this type of research as a form of professional development is presented.

We think that PAR is not only a kind of research, but also a way to transform the school climate into a more democratic, participatory, and responsible community, so in a way it is also a kind of citizen science that becomes an important part of social sciences.

We hope that this guide will inspire school leaders, teachers, and other stakeholders in educational practise to try out a new way of transforming and developing a school community into a healthy community.

About the project

The project »Teaching to be – supporting teachers' professional growth and wellbeing in the field of social and emotional learning« aims to support school teachers' career improvement by exploring innovative professional development practices to foster and improve teachers' professional wellbeing. After the experiment conducted in the previous Erasmus+ KA3 Learning to Be project, that focused on the development and assessment of students' social and emotional skills, it has become obvious that teachers' contribution is crucial to the success of students' social, emotional and cognitive development. Teacher shortages in general are a serious concern for the project countries, the governments feel the need to address policies that relate to the preparation, recruitment and retention of high-quality teachers and look for new evidence-based solutions to improve teacher professional wellbeing.

The main research question of the project was “how and to what extent can teachers' professional wellbeing be supported through teacher education practices?” Therefore, the Teaching to Be project focused its attention on developing and promoting new organizational learning practices for teachers that can help enhance their sense of professional wellbeing and contribute to better school policies.

The project was a consortium of 13 partners led by Ministries of Education from Lithuania, Latvia, Portugal and Slovenia, in cooperation with several universities and teams of experts in teacher education and mental wellbeing from 8 countries: Lithuania, Latvia, Slovenia, Portugal, Italy, Spain, Austria and Norway.

In order to foster teachers' professional wellbeing and promote practices to support it, the project develops and examines a set of innovative professional development measures:

- An Online Course on Teachers' Professional Wellbeing, which helps to develop teachers' practical skills for sustaining their wellbeing through self-regulated learning;
- A Participatory Action Research (PAR) Guide for Schools which should help school communities to work together on school issues, improve professional wellbeing and develop new professional skills for teachers and school leaders.

The project explores how and to what extent practices affect teacher's wellbeing indicators and school level factors. A mixed-methods experimental research, combining a quasi-experimental intervention study (QE) and a qualitative Participatory Action Research (PAR) study in schools was conducted in 8 countries.

Design of the project was planned in three years from February 2021 up to February 2024. Project actions involved school teachers, school leaders and other school community members.

The outcomes of the project will help promote policies for teachers' professional wellbeing in the workplace, development of teachers' education practices and career pathways, as well as improving the quality of teaching and learning in schools and support the systemic teaching and learning of Key-competences.

Definition of Wellbeing

The pursuit of life satisfaction, care of physical, mental and social health and adoption of a sustainable lifestyle is a definition of Wellbeing as stated in the European framework LifeComp (2020). By adopting a systemic understanding that takes account of the interaction of multiple factors, wellbeing can be characterised as emerging from the dynamic integration of and relationships between the physical, cognitive, emotional, social, existential, and environmental factors.

The literature paints a worrying picture of the effect that work-related stress is having on school staff wellbeing. Therefore, the concept of wellbeing is becoming a large concept within research. Generally, the study of subjective well-being has increased with the positive psychology movement, where there has been a general focus on the strengths of human beings, and how to build a good quality of life (Seligman, 2002).

Subjective well-being is a concept that comes closest to the general term "Happiness (Diener, Lucas, & Oishi, 2018) and is composed of three components: Satisfaction with life, positive affect and negative affect. Satisfaction with life is often referred to as the cognitive component of subjective well-being and can be defined as; "people's explicit and conscious evaluations of their lives often based on the factors that the individual deems relevant (Diener et al., 2018 p.3). There is evidence showing that individuals with high levels of well-being live longer (Veenhoven, 2008) have better physical health (Barak, 2006), are more creative (Baas, De Dreu, & Nijstad, 2008), and are more successful and efficient at work (Achor, 2011). Conclusively, subjective well-being is therefore an important determinant not only for individual's physical and psychological health, but also for their personal growth, and their job performance (Rahm & Heise, 2019).

Studies concerning teachers in particular have found evidence that high levels of subjective wellbeing functions as a protective factor against burnout and depression (Lyubomirsky & Lepper, 1999). Moreover, high levels of subjective well-being as also been found to affect student outcomes in a positive manner.

Another aspect of well-being is often referred to as professional well-being. Professional well-being is not a single, theoretical concept, but may consist of several aspects related to the work-environment in particular. In this project we focused on the following constructs related to professional well-being: *Job engagement*. It can be defined as "a state of mind characterized by vigour, dedication and absorption (Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzalez-Roma & Bakker, 2002). There is solid evidence that job engagement relates to the well-being and performance of employees (Halbesleben, 2010). *Job satisfaction*. It can be defined as the degree of positive affect towards a job or its components (Adams & Bond 2000). *Organizational support*. It is well established in research that social support from both colleagues and management are significant determinants of employees' well-being. For instance, social support has been found to improve our ability to cope and also functions as a buffer against negative and stressful events in the workplace (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). *Teacher self-efficacy*. When applied to teachers, can be defined as: "Individual teacher's beliefs in their ability to plan, organize and carry out activities required to attain given educational goals (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2007, p. 612). Teacher self-efficacy has been found to relate to student performance (Henson, Kogan, & Vacha-Haase, 2001; Tschannen-Moran, Hoy, & Hoy, 1998) and teacher's well-being (se Zee & Koomen, 2016). *Job crafting*. It can be defined as self-initiated change behaviors that employees engage in with the aim to align their jobs with their

own preferences, motives, and passions (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). It should be emphasized that job crafting does not involve redesigning the job entirely, but rather changing specific aspect of the job within the boundaries of a certain job task (Berg & Dutton, 2008).

About Participatory Action Research (PAR)

The PAR methodological framework is a cycle consisting of feasibility study, evaluation of effectiveness and change process, implementation (implementation, surveillance and follow up), and development (theory, modelling and evidence base development). There are opportunities for gathering rich data that falls around QE, but without the properties and processes of PAR, these opportunities to apply learning from each step of the cycle and effect change can be lost. PAR is usually described as a cyclic research process in which participants plan, act, reflect on the results of their actions, and modify the plan for the next cycle, repeated until they achieve their goal. Research and action are conducted together, the research informing and informed by each cycle of action. PAR involves participants in defining a problem and designing and testing potential solutions, e.g. interventions, educational improvements, trial methods. This is more than co-design and could provide useful input to build a strong QE design that results in successful intervention implementation and return of research results to the involved community. So, PAR involves a cyclical approach with repeated cycles of incremental improvement, analogous to 'plan-do-study-act.' PAR partners the researcher and research participants in a collaborative effort to address issues in specific system - schools. It is a collaborative, cyclical, reflective inquiry design that focuses on problem solving, improving work practices, and on understanding the effect of the intervention as part of the research process. It explicitly calls for making sense of the impact of change, and refining actions based on this impact. Key elements of PAR are generation of new knowledge, change, educating, theory generation or refinement, relationship building. It is based on collaborative design and evaluation.

The integration of PAR and QE design results in a new approach that reflects not only the complex nature of schools, but also the need to obtain generalizable knowledge regarding the implementation process. Since the proposed online educational intervention (OWC) is complex, and although QE is built to accommodate complexity.

In the “Teaching to Be“ project, PAR actions in schools formed the basis of our experimental intervention in schools:

1. First steps were 1. the effort to involve teachers into PAR actions in their school communities and 2. to convince them for co-development of the Online Wellbeing Course content together with the project team. These are the crucial actions in the first phase, because for this kind of action all participants must see the meaning of being involved in co-development of changes. If the first steps are successful, then, there shouldn't be a problem in the second phase of the research – testing the change.
2. When we reached schools and teachers, we could engage them in active learning on the fully published Online Wellbeing Course.

The evaluation of this intervention required a fuller, richer and therefore thick description of the intervention and its effects. The acquisition and use of evidence were a part of the research process, built in from the first design step, and feedback to teachers at every stage of the research. We proposed PAR as a framework to address the limitations of QE in evaluating on-line educational intervention (OWC) in relation to teacher's professional wellbeing. Reflexivity, documenting observations and lessons learned, and the contributions of participants were included into the research design. Meetings from the first cycle were continued until the study was finished. Reflection diaries were included in the project, although they are standard practice in PAR.

Via the Project research, it was possible to see how the five characteristics of PAR are being used in the design and execution of a QE and the dissemination of the results.

1. Creating a communicative space to achieve co-design.
Creating a communicative space within the international Project team was sustained throughout the project in different ways, as per the objectives. Several meetings were held to further develop relationships with a Project team and teachers who want to participate. The communicative space was created when the researchers' and teachers' groups were finalised. This process leveraged the democracy and participation characteristic of PAR. These meetings are an opportunity for updating reflection on progress and problems, problem solving, decisions about adapting the research design and/or providing feedback to research participants from the reflections and determining next steps for the research to progress. During this time educational processes was documented and modified for the purpose of implementing the online intervention.
2. Different ways of knowing, many perspectives.
The research group consisted of members who came from different research perspectives (positivist, interpretivist, critical). Sometimes conflicts aroused because of incommensurability of these different perspectives. We had debates about contextual data collection and the value of qualitative data collection. Stressors because of the complex and complicated nature of the research, and differences in opinion were resolved with the focus of researchers' and teachers' redirection to the common purpose of the research project.
3. Democracy and participation meant that in a PAR group each researcher's contribution is valued.
4. Constant iterative improvement.
We used PAR cycles to ensure that the QE was appropriately executed. Researchers and participants learnt from each cycle and sub-cycle of the entire project. Refinement of teacher's professional wellbeing components, improvement in the functioning at school, improvements which were progressed from one site implementation to the next, all produced continuous learning that was used to inform every stage of the research. Refinement of the QE protocol and associated processes occurred in sub-cycles.
5. Emergence.
The cyclical constant improvement approach enabled researchers and participants to look for consequences and address any adverse events early. A QE is focussed solely on the on-line intervention OWC so we didn't have sufficient space to identify issues and address them properly.

International experiences about implementation of PAR

The following section briefly describes the international experiences about implementation of PAR. The project was cooperation and collaboration of eight different countries, each with its own specific background and teams of experts in teacher education and mental wellbeing. The mode of description has been decided by each country and therefore descriptions may vary. However, the main thread remains the same.

Austria

The schools for the T2Be project participation were mainly approached via personal contact of the Austrian cooperation partner, the University College of Teacher Education Lower Austria, whereby primarily affiliated cooperation schools were included in the projects' PAR actions. This was crucial as schools had to deal with the consequences of the COVID -19 pandemic, leading to high professional and personal workloads at that time. Some schools expressed interest in PAR actions but cited the current workload at their schools as a barrier to taking on additional projects. The in-person presentation of the upcoming PAR actions at schools had a positive impact on aspiring participants and level of information. Notably, teachers showed significant interest in enhancing their professional well-being, shifting the focus to teacher well-being alongside student well-being, which had traditionally been the focus.

In total, 67 teachers from five schools participated in PAR actions with 82.08% of the participants being female. Due to strict pandemic measures in schools, meetings with teachers for the development of the Online Wellbeing Course (OWC) content by conducting focus groups mainly took place online. Towards the end of the development phase with schools, there was a growing preference for and execution of in-person meetings. Scheduling online and in-person school meetings to develop the OWC proved somewhat challenging due to fixed school timetables and private obligations, in some cases leaving limited flexibility for school meetings. Overall, teachers adapted very well to conducting PAR actions in the different settings. The idea of actively contributing to the OWC development for their profession, and learning something new with intense interactions and collaborations with their colleagues was very positively received. The meetings with schools were diverse, with different team members moderating each session. The use of various online tools such as Mentimeter or Padlets was well-received by the participants, also due to increased anonymity. Participants reported that having space and time for interactions with colleagues outside of the school routine was a significant enrichment, contributing to awareness and strengthening the school community. The involvement of principals in some of the school meetings could potentially have had an impact on the openness of the participants. Somewhat longer pauses between the PAR actions may have influenced compliance and motivations. Making contact through email proved to be rather challenging, whereas personal contact or contact via telephone tended to be advantageous for maintaining contact and ensuring continuous participation in all PAR actions. During the independent testing of the OWC, there were a few requests for help with uncertainties, mostly regarding technical issues. However, some participants found the participation to be rather time-consuming and labour-intensive. Nevertheless, the positive aspects included learning new contents in an online setting, opportunities for reflection and awareness building, as well as the exchange with colleagues during the OWC's completion.

Lithuania

In Lithuania, the PAR study took place in two schools in Vilnius, one in Ukmergė, one in Telšiai and one in Klaipėda district. Three meetings were held in each school, with a total of 78 teachers participating. 15 teachers from each school were to take part in the project, for a total of 75 teachers.

Teachers were very actively involved in the discussions and participated actively in the on-line course development. They were offered topics and ideas for the content of the course, so it was important and useful to hear the insights and suggestions from the future participants on the course.

Findings of the quasi-experiment demonstrate that in changes in burnout level significantly decreased in group A ($p=0.042$). Also there is positive change in ability motivate students (self-efficacy sub-scale). Changes in group A ($p=0.007$) and B ($p=0.002$) are statistically significant.

Slovenia

The schools for the T2Be project participation were mainly approached via personal contact of the Slovenian partner Utrip Institute. 23 schools took part in the Teaching to Be project: seven schools participated in the Participatory Action Research (PAR) and the experimentation (group A), in 2021/2022 and 2022/2023 school years respectively.

We didn't have problems with motivating the schools and teachers to participate, because they had already a lot of good experiences with Utrip from the past projects. Although they were stressed because of professional and personal workloads at that time, and traumatised because of COVID -19 pandemic, they saw the possibilities to contribute to the project. Following the in-person presentation of the upcoming Participatory Action Research (PAR) actions at schools, a notable positive impact was observed in terms of motivating participants. Particularly striking was the significant interest displayed by teachers in elevating their professional well-being. This marked a noteworthy shift in focus, redirecting attention from the traditional emphasis solely on student well-being to a more comprehensive consideration of both teacher and student well-being.

There were some scheduling complexities because we had to convene both online and in-person school meetings but all in all the teachers were enthusiastic and motivated about actively contributing to the OWC's evolution for professional development, engaging in intensive interactions, and collaborating with colleagues. Participants expressed that the dedicated time and space for interactions beyond the school routine significantly enriched their experiences, fostering awareness and reinforcing the school community.

The findings obtained in the Slovenian sample were encouraging and showed that the Online Wellbeing Course was effective. In particular, we found:

- a statistically significant increase of teachers' self-efficacy, especially for the subscales motivation of students and maintaining the discipline, in the groups A and B;
- a statistically significant decrease in time pressure in group A and B, after attending the OWC;
- a statistically significant decrease of burnout (questioning the value of the work), especially in the group A, composed by teachers who took part in the PAR the first year and attended the OWC in the second year of the project.

Italy

In Italy, 77 teachers participated in the first phase of the project and specifically in the PAR. They worked in 5 public schools in two regions located in North Italy, namely Lombardy (N = 47; 3 schools) and Piedmont (N = 30; 2 schools). They taught at kindergarten, primary school, middle school, or high school. Participants were aged between 25 and 65 years (mean age = 49 years) and were mainly women. On average, they had 19.7 years of teaching experience (range = 0-41 years) and the majority worked full-time at school.

The PAR was helpful for both researchers and teachers. In fact, on one hand, it helped the Italian team understand teachers' feelings and perceptions related to their professional wellbeing. Scientific literature provides a picture of the situation in European and Italian schools, but being in the field guaranteed to identify the indicators of stress and wellbeing that Italian teachers most commonly have felt at present. On the other hand, teachers were more than happy to share their experiences with colleagues and liked being cared for by the researchers who moderated the meetings. In fact, they explicitly said these occasions of sharing lack at school, even if they do need them. Furthermore, it gave them the feeling to be active in the process and motivated them to participate.

The most interesting thing in the PAR process was that teachers of different schools and school grades told similar stories, suggesting that stressors, challenges, and needs overlap and belong to the whole teaching profession.

Teachers participated in the PAR voluntarily. The potential bias is that participants were those who are more sensitive to the wellbeing topic (e.g., they usually try their best to change themselves or some challenging situations). Thus, the involvement of all teachers in a school may be more beneficial.

When school coordinators and vice-principals attended the group meetings, other teachers sometimes had difficulties in freely expressing their thoughts. This occurred especially with novice teachers, who were afraid of being judged or underestimated by colleagues.

Some teachers liked speaking and needed to be stopped to let even colleagues speak. This was necessary to have opinions from every teacher, however, it could be perceived as rude.

Portugal

The Portuguese team conducted three rounds of focus groups interviews with a total of 57 teachers from five schools. The focus group interviews were conducted online via ZOOM and each round lasted 60-90 minutes. The focus group interviews were tape-recorded with the permission of the participants and then transcribed verbatim for the purpose of analysis. The data were analysed following the six-step-method of thematic analysis described by Braun and Clarke (2006). The data collection and analysis

were undertaken progressively as the data collection unfolded. Based on the results of the focus groups interviews we make the following recommendations aimed to contribute to, and ensure the improvement of teachers' professional wellbeing:

- 1) To deepen and reinforce content in initial teacher training that encourages introspection, self-reflection and the development of social and emotional skills, for the development of personal well-being and as future professionals;
- 2) To promote ongoing training for teachers on topics related to well-being, as well as the implementation of intervention programs linked to teachers' mental health;
- 3) To integrate preventive well-being projects/initiatives in schools to promote collaboration between the various stakeholders in the education community (teachers, students, families, staff, etc.).
- 4) To involve the leadership (e.g. School Principals, Heads of School Departments) in strategies and activities that promote a positive school climate.
- 5) To create conditions to reduce teachers' bureaucratic workload.
- 6) To provide teachers the time and space to engage in collaborative work concerned with their professional work.
- 7) To develop well-being initiatives involving both teachers and students.
- 8) To promote, among political decision-makers, greater appreciation of the teaching profession, valuing teachers as agents of change and social development.

Norway

In Norway, we conducted three rounds of focus group interviews. The intention was to carry out interviews with three teachers in five schools, however one of the schools withdrew after the first round of interviews. The participating respondents were all teachers in primary schools (age 6-16) with approved teacher training in Norway.

Throughout the interviews, the teachers shared first-hand experience of their working situation, work well-being and job satisfaction.

From the Norwegian team's perspective, it was interesting to hear about how the teachers' handled challenges in their own work performance. It was related to planning and teaching time, student behaviour, collaboration with colleagues, the management, or their own class management. We had some assumptions in advance based on research and theory. The reflections from the interviews gave us insight and understanding into different teachers' working methods and mindsets in the face of challenges they have encountered in their jobs.

Throughout this participatory action research, we saw some common features that emerged in the interviews from the various schools. The school managements' role in building a safe and positive working environment, and professional work community was highlighted by several respondents. The teachers also pointed to more demanding parents and greater time pressure than before, there are much greater requirements for documentation, regarding legal regulations.

General issues and recommendations

The experiences in all partner countries were pretty similar, there were some national specifics connected with cultural and political differences, but after all, we can expose some general issues and suggestions for implementing PAR.

The main issues were:

- Lack of time, workload,
- Partial collaboration – just some of teachers and not the whole school,
- Lack of support of head teachers,
- Hierarchic relationships within the group members influenced on the feeling of trust and safety,
- Too enthusiastic cooperation (with a lack of empathy) of some group members was sometimes an obstacle for including others,
- Technical problems and lack of digital literacy,
- Fluctuation of the employees.

To address these issues, we recommend (to):

- 1) Encourage introspection, self-reflection and the development of socio-emotional skills.
- 2) Promote teacher training on professional well-being issues.
- 3) Introduce intervention programmes related to teachers' mental health.
- 4) Promote wellbeing prevention projects/initiatives involving the different stakeholders of the educational community.
- 5) Initiative and active leadership from the school administration.

School leaders could agree to participate in some group discussions with teachers, facilitated by a practitioner. In this way they would become more aware of teachers' feelings and experiences and work together to find out how to deal with problems.

- 6) Create conditions to reduce the bureaucratic workload of teachers.
- 7) Provide opportunities for teachers to engage in collaboration in their classroom practice.
- 8) Collect complaints but also solutions. Schools implementing PAR should collect complaints from teachers, but also ideas on how to solve the problems.

Complaints during PAR (e.g. about some challenges teachers experience) are common and allow negative emotions to be vented. The teachers' feeling of being listened to and understood in the group is fundamental. However, there is a risk that they feel "as before" after the meetings because no solutions are found in the group.

- 9) Involve school psychologists. The PAR could be conducted by school psychologists who work at the school.

The school psychologist could dedicate special time to the teachers and involve them in group discussions about their professional well-being. The teachers' sharing of their experiences can inform the school psychologist about what materials, activities and instructions are needed to promote professional well-being in the school.

- 11) Embed PAR in already existing systems in the school, i.e. in the agenda of pedagogical meetings, methodological groups.

12) Regularly planned collaboration in discussions and reflections during OWC sharing as part of PAR (not just individual work)

13) Regular monitor of wellbeing in schools. Use a whole-school approach to implement wellbeing through social-emotional learning by implementing evidence-based programmes such as Learning to be and Teaching to be.

14) Work in partnership with parents and other stakeholders to promote wellbeing in school.

15) Establish larger groups of PAR teachers in the school at the beginning of the project.

If the PAR process is divided into several phases with breaks in between, the groups of teachers may change for explainable reasons, e.g. change of job, illness, etc. It is therefore recommended to invite more teachers to each group than are needed for the PAR.

16) Make clear agreements with school head teachers. When inviting teachers to participate in the PAR project, agreements were made between the project administrator and the school head teacher.

The process could run more smoothly if tripartite agreements between the participants were signed by the project administrator, the headmaster and the teacher. This would help to ensure teacher participation.

17) The implementation of PAR should be co-ordinated with other activities in the country to provide a qualitative insight into all activities.

18) Plan date and time for PAR activities to reduce workload and lack of time.

Not only in difficult times such as during a crisis or pandemic, but it is also beneficial to plan PAR activities of new projects as early as possible and present them to teachers, ideally one school year in advance. This gives them time to allocate resources to new projects, including PAR activities, and to focus on these activities effectively. The periods between activities should be kept short, with only short breaks between them. Special consideration should be given to the school's own activities and labour-intensive phases in the school and sufficient time should be allocated for PAR activities.

19) Incorporate diverse and innovative implementation of PAR activities with a personalised component.

Varied and engaging design of activities through the use of different methods, such as new online tools, can have a positive effect on teachers' motivation. In particular, a mix of digital and face-to-face components in PAR activities was highly recommended. We therefore recommend selecting innovative methods and including face-to-face interactions in the activities.

20) Maintaining online and face-to-face contact with participating teachers.

Face-to-face contact is beneficial in maintaining communication and information sharing over time and ensuring compliance by participating teachers, although interactions are not always possible on a regularly and online contact also has its advantages. We therefore recommend utilising both types of communication.

21) Provide for the needs and safety of teachers.

Choosing healthy foods (during breaks) and designing places/spaces as safe and "warm" spaces are critical to their sense of importance and value – respect for their well-being.

22) Be mindful of time and give teachers enough space to talk, ask questions and seek solutions. This could be an opportunity for supervision and some psycho-hygienic practises.

Conclusions

When we evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of evidence through the application of the online intervention by PAR, we find that the implementation was successful. The results show that (after identification and evaluation) we can confirm a link between the intervention (development of an online course and learning through this course) and the change (teachers' professional well-being).

We can conclude that the implementation of Participatory Action Research (PAR) in primary and secondary schools involves engaging students, teachers and other stakeholders in a collaborative process to identify and address issues relevant to the school community.

In the end we present some concrete suggestions for implementing PAR in schools:

1. Create a supportive environment:

- Create a culture that values collaboration, open communication and shared decision making.
- Create a supportive environment that encourages students, teachers and administrators to actively participate in research activities.

2. Choose relevant topics:

- Involve students and teachers in identifying topics that are meaningful and relevant to the school community.
- Consider topics such as school climate, bullying, academic achievement, curriculum effectiveness, or other concerns identified by stakeholders.

3. Training and capacity building:

- Provide training for teachers and students on the principles and methods of PAR.
- Equip participants with research skills, including data collection, analysis, and interpretation.

4. Form research teams:

- Form collaborative research teams consisting of students, teachers, administrators, and possibly parents or community members.
- Ensure diversity in the teams to bring different perspectives to the research process.

5. Develop action plans:

- Guide the research teams in developing action plans based on the results of their research.
- Encourage teams to formulate tangible, achievable goals that can lead to positive change in the school environment.

6. Implement action plans:

- Support the implementation of action plans and monitor progress.
- Ensure that the actions taken are sustainable and contribute to long-term improvements.

7. Regular reflection and evaluation:

- Schedule regular reflection meetings to discuss progress, challenges and lessons learnt during the PAR process.
- Use evaluation tools to assess the impact of the research and the effectiveness of the measures implemented.

8. Dissemination of findings:

- Encourage the dissemination of research findings within the school community and beyond.
- Consider organising presentations, workshops or events to disseminate information and reach a wider audience.

9. Integrate PAR into the curriculum:

- Integrate PAR principles and methods into the curriculum to make it a continuous and sustainable part of the educational experience.
- Explore opportunities for students to engage with PAR as part of their coursework.

10. Encourage community engagement:

- Expand the PAR process to include parents, community members, and local organisations.
- Build partnerships that can support and sustain the positive changes initiated by PAR.

11. Provide resources and support:

- Provide human and material resources to support research activities and implementation of action plans.
- Establish a system of ongoing mentoring and support for those involved in PAR.

Remember that flexibility and adaptability are critical to the PAR process. It is important to recognise that the dynamics and needs of individual school communities may vary, so implementation should be tailored to the specific context of the school.

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