Qualitative Research – Asking Questions in Critical Realist Research

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Timeline

- Baseline – September 2024
- Process Evaluation in schools 1 – late November/early December 2024
- Midterm Evaluation in community and schools – late January/February 2025
- End of Line Evaluation June/July 2025

Qualitative Research - Intervention Schools

- Baseline – community, parents/main carers, community members/leaders, teachers, pupils in intervention schools – questions about what the situation is like

- Process – teachers and pupils in schools - critical realist questions – how and why, observation of changes

- Midterm - main carers, community leaders – critical realist questions

- End of line – parents/main carers, community leaders, teachers, pupils, observation – critical realist questions

Sampling – Baseline, Midterm, End-of line

Interviews

Schools

– 100% of teachers, school administration, education officer (inspector)

- 4 pupils a grade (1X male, 1X female from each class) select using a probability method e.g. taking names out of a hat.

Community

- 20 main carers/parents (10 mother/10 fathers from different households)

- 2 X village leaders (1 male/1 female)

- 4 X community members (2 male/2female)

Schools → **Intervention** → **Mechanisms Triggered by Agency/Assets Developed** → **Outcome**

Internal Factors
- School Size
- Teacher/Pupil Ratio
- Funding
- Leadership
- Rules and Regulations
- School Environment
- Teaching Practices
- Teacher/Pupil Relations
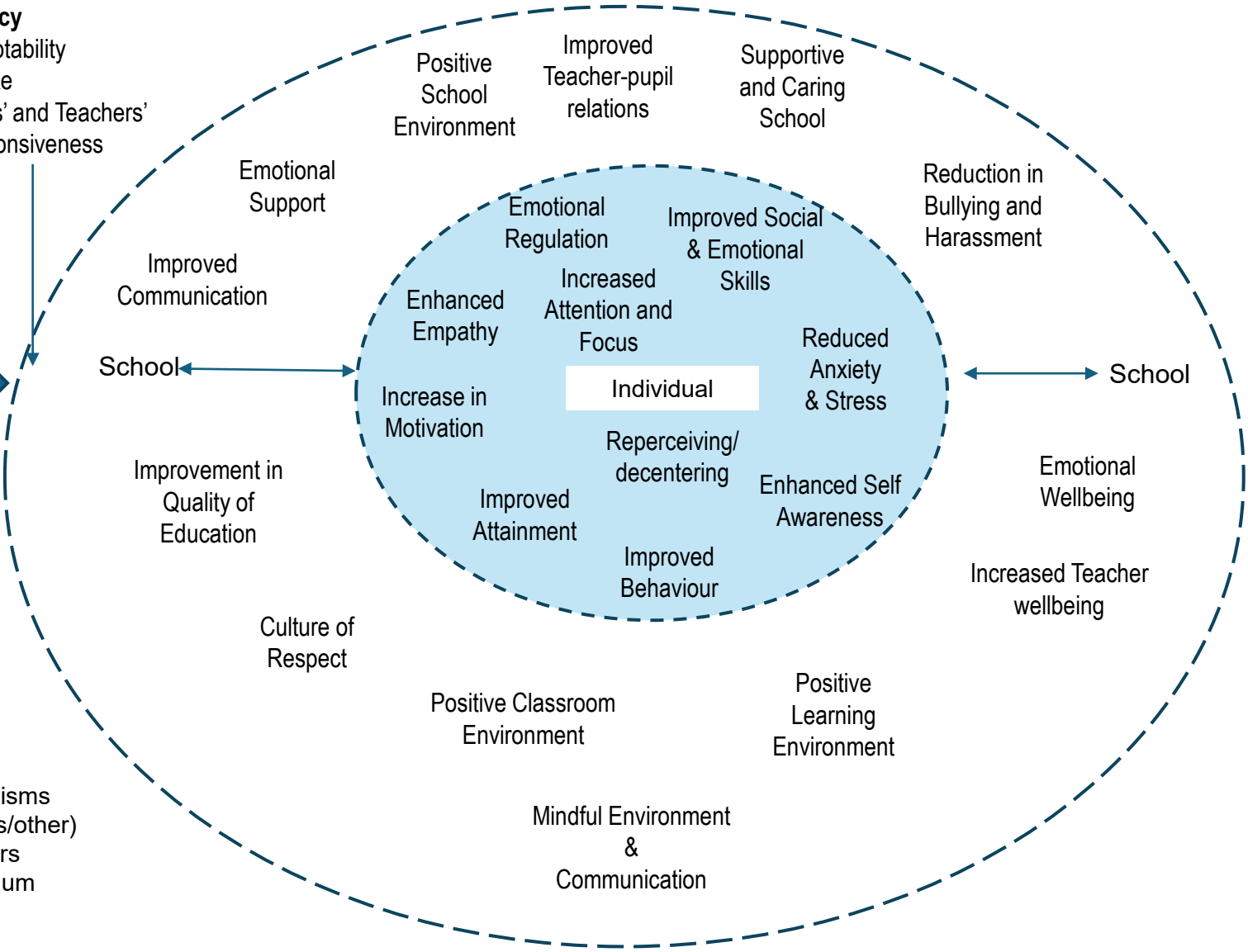- Peer/Peer Relations

External Factors
- Family Relations
- Local Community Relations
- Peer/Peer Relations
- Cultural Values
- Education Policy
- Education Funding
- Health Funding
- Health Service

Agency
Acceptability
Uptake
Pupils' and Teachers' Responsiveness

Mindfulness Curriculum

Intervention Mechanisms
Facilitators (teachers/other)
Training of Facilitators
Mindfulness Curriculum
Fidelity
Amount/Dose
Quality
Reach

Positive School Environment

Improved Teacher-pupil relations

Supportive and Caring School

Emotional Support

Reduction in Bullying and Harassment

Improved Communication

School

Emotional Regulation

Improved Social & Emotional Skills

Enhanced Empathy

Increased Attention and Focus

Individual

Reduced Anxiety & Stress

Increase in Motivation

Reperceiving/ decentering

Enhanced Self Awareness

School

Improvement in Quality of Education

Improved Attainment

Improved Behaviour

Emotional Wellbeing

Increased Teacher wellbeing

Culture of Respect

Positive Classroom Environment

Positive Learning Environment

Mindful Environment & Communication

Improved Mental Wellbeing of Pupils

Tools

- Agendas - baseline, midterm and end-of- line

- Observation schedules for pupils and teachers

- Use drawing and storytelling especially with younger children.

Baseline -

- Current situation at home, in school and in the community.
- Structures, roles and relationships, culture.

- For teachers only – how they think the intervention will work.

Agendas for CR Research – Process Evaluation - Theory refining

Engaging with the mindfulness intervention.

Theory led interviewing. Interviewer takes control of the interviews.

Insider accounts of participants of their experiences – richly textured accounts of events, experiences and underlaying processes.

Subject matter of the interview is the programme theory – interviewees, confirm, refine, falsify the theory.

Empirical - what has changed since the mindfulness intervention.

- How have they changed? Why have they changed? What brought about the changes.
- How and why questions - how and why the intervention has (or has not) changed the structure and culture of the classroom /school.
- What has changed since the intervention was introduced
- What interactions between people and groups caused it – how did the change come about, what caused it.
- Ask for examples of what has happened, to them, to their fellow pupils, to their teachers
- Storytelling – the programmes story.

Theory refining Interviews – Teachers

Programme Theory is the subject of the Interview

The researcher 'teaches' the preliminary CIAMO conceptual structure

Researcher asks questions

Respondent's responses validates, disqualifies and/or modifies researcher's theories

Respondent ilearns the conceptual structure of the researcher and applies it to their understanding.

Respondent applies conceptual framework to experiences in Answering the researcher's questions

Designing CR Research Questions for the End of Line Evaluation - Theory consolidation

What questions – what has happened/ what has changed ?

How has it happened ?

Why has it happened?

Observation Schedule - Baseline, Mid-Term, End-of-Line

- Classroom Observation
- School Observation
- Playground Observation

References/Reading

Bronnimann, A. (2022) How to phase critical realist interview questions in applied social science research. Journal of Critical Realism 21(1): 1-24.

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Mukumbang, R C et al. (2020) Using the realist interview approach to maintain theoretical awareness in realist studies. Qualitative Research 20(4): 485-515.

Acknowledgments