

Harbingers Of Rain: Land And Life In South India

Action Research

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ARTICLE

Prajateerpu, power and knowledge

The politics of participatory action research in development
Part 2. Analysis, reflections and implications

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ABSTRACT

We examine the roles of the diverse co-inquirers involved in the power-equalizing action research project known as *Prajateerpu*. While privileging neither official expertise nor experiential knowledge over the other, we suggest the need to create arenas where expert knowledge is put under public scrutiny as a means of contributing to a redressing of the power imbalance that exists between the poor and elite social groups. We emphasize the important tensions that arose in *Prajateerpu* between the views of those participants whose analysis had become marginalized from decision-making processes and those who were in positions of power. Having reflected on the role of various actors in the two-year process, we look at the potential contributions processes such as *Prajateerpu* could make towards processes that aim to democratize knowledge and promote social justice.

KEY WORDS

- co-inquiry
- deliberative democracy
- power-equalizing action research

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