

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

'Action research' is an approach that intends not just to study a social situation but also to change it. It involves participatory and collaborative methods and problematizes the role of the researcher as well as the practices of other participants. This module is aimed at all those interested in participatory and reflexive approaches to research as well as to those whose project is more clearly action research. The module will be student-focused and participatory and will offer opportunities for student presentations. Readings may also be differentiated according to the background and interests of participants. As action research is not a method as such it will adopt a reflective approach rather than provide tips for new researchers. Throughout the module, students will be asked to keep a reflective journal of their learning about research, which will form the basis for assessment and will feed into discussion. Students will also be given an opportunity to make a short presentation.

INTENDED OUTCOMES FOR THE MODULE:

- Develop understanding of practical, political and theoretical issues posed by participatory research and action-orientated in a variety of settings.
- Develop a theoretical position towards action-oriented and participatory research
- Gain competence in planning and evaluating participatory and action research projects.

PROGRAMME OF STUDY

The module takes place over six two hour sessions. The first will introduce the module and set in motion the reflective journal which will run through the term. It will also establish the nature of the participants' interest in the module which will be used to plan the remaining sessions later in the term. Elements likely to be addressed are:

- the tension between participant and researcher practices and how this impacts on the micro politics of the research setting;
- planning and carrying out participatory research methods;
- the practicalities of planning and structuring a project using both cyclical and linear approaches
- the nature of reflection and reflexivity and how they are produced in action research
- the methodological implications of different theoretical stances for example critical theory and post-structuralism.
- frameworks for evaluating action research
- the extent to which claims made by participatory and action research enthusiasts can be justified.

ASSESSMENT:

A commentary on a reflective journal of learning about research with examples from the journal (equivalent to 4000 words overall).

KEY READINGS FOR FIRST SESSION

- Ortlipp M. (2008) Keeping and Using Reflective Journals in the Qualitative Research Process *The Qualitative Report* 13 (4) 695-705. Open access online at <http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR13-4/ortlipp.pdf>
- Newberry, D. (2001) Diaries and Fieldnotes in the Research Process, *Research Issues in Art, Design and Media* 1, 1- 17 Open access online at <http://www.biad.bcu.ac.uk/research/rti/riadm/issue1/riadmlIssue1.pdf>

OTHER READINGS

As mentioned above the further readings will depend on the nature of the group participating in the module but these are indicative readings:

- Berge, B-M, and Ve, H. (2000) *Action research for gender equity*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Brown, T & Jones, L (2001) *Action research and postmodernism: congruence and critique*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Cammarota, J. and Fine, M. (2008) *Revolutionizing education: youth participatory action research in motion*. London: Routledge.
- Campbell, A. and Groundwater-Smith, S. (2007) *An ethical approach to practitioner research : dealing with issues and dilemmas in action research*. London: Routledge, 2007.
- Chambers, R. (1997). *Whose Reality Counts? Putting the first last*. London, Intermediate Technology Publications.
- Chambers, R. (2002) *Participatory workshops: a sourcebook of 21 sets of ideas and activities*. London: Earthscan.
- Cooke B. and Uma Kothari (2001.) *Participation: the New Tyranny*, London, Zed Books.
- Cornwell, A. (2011) *The participation reader*. London, Zed.
- Couture J-C (1994) Dracula as Action researcher *Educational Action Research*, 2,1 pp.127-132 and Gough N (1996) Textual Authority in Bram Stoker's Dracula; or, What's really at Stake in Action Research? *Educational Action Research* 4,2 pp.257-265.
- Denzin , N. (2002) Social Work in the Seventh Moment, *Qualitative Social Work* 1, 25-38
- Fals-Borda, O. and Rahman, M. (1991) *Action and knowledge: breaking the monopoly with participatory action research*. New York: Apex. .
- Greenwood, D. and M. Levin (2007) *Introduction to Action Research: Social Research for Social Change*. Thousand Oaks, Sage.
- Hammersley, M. (2004) Action research: a contradiction in terms? *Oxford Review of Education* 30(2), 165-181
- Heikkinen, H., Kakkori, L. and Huttunen, R. (2001) This is My Truth, Tell Me Yours: some aspects of action research quality in the light of truth theories. *Educational Action Research*, 9(1) 9-24.
- Hickey S. and Mohan G. (2004) *Participation: From Tyranny to Transformation?: Exploring New Approaches to Participation in Development*, London, Zed.
- Hollingsworth, S (1997) *International action research: a casebook for educational reform*, London: Falmer.
- Humphrey C. (2007) Insider-outsider: Activating the hyphen. *Action Research*; 5; 11-26.
- Humphries B (1997) From Critical Thought to Emancipatory Action: Contradictory Research Goals? *Sociological Research Online*, vol. 2, no. 1,
- Jarvis, P. (1999) *The practitioner-researcher: developing theory from practice*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 1999.
- McTaggart, R. (1997) *Participatory action research: international contexts and consequences*. Albany: SUNY Press.
- Moon, J. (2006) *Learning Journals*. London, Routledge.

- Reason, P. and Bradbury, H. (2000/2006/2007) *Handbook of action research: participative inquiry and practice*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Shillingford, A. (2006) *Participatory Research Techniques: training of trainers manual*. St Michael Barbados, Caribbean Development and DFID.
- Smith, L., Bratini, L., Chambers, D., Jensen, R. & Romero, L. (2010) Between idealism and reality: Meeting the challenges of participatory action research. *Action Research* 8(4) 407–425
- Somekh, B. (2006). *Action research: a methodology for change and development*. Maidenhead, Open University Press
- Taylor P. and Pettit, J. (2007) Learning and teaching participation through action research: Experiences from an innovative master's programme, *Action Research*; 5; 231-247
- Todhunter C (2001) Undertaking Action Research: Negotiating the Road Ahead, Social Research Update 34. <http://www.soc.surrey.ac.uk/sru/SRU34.html>
- Walker, M. (2007) Action research and narratives: 'Finely Aware and Richly Responsible', *Educational Action Research*, 15:2, 295 – 303.
- Winter R (1998) Finding a Voice – Thinking with Others: A conception of Action Research *Educational Action Research* 6,1 pp. 53- 68.
- [Hawkins K. \(2015\) The complexities of participatory action research and the problems of power, identity and influence, Educational Action Research, 23:4, 464-478](#)
- [Santos D. \(2015\): Re-signifying participatory action research \(PAR\) in higher education: what does 'P' stand for in PAR?. Educational Action Research](#)
- [Torres Carrillo, A. \(2010\). Generating Knowledge in Popular Education: From Participatory Research to the Systematization of Experiences. International Journal of Action Research 6, 2-3, pp. 196-222.](#)
- Geilfus, F. (2008) 80 tools for participatory development: appraisal, planning, follow-up and evaluation San Jose, C.R.: IICA,
- Various authors (2012) Articles in Special edition of Forum; *Qualitative Research* 13(1).

SOME WEBSITES:

<http://www.cparn.org/p/par-resources-and-literature.html>

<http://www.powercube.net/>

<http://www.esri.mmu.ac.uk/carnnew/>

<http://www.alarassociation.org/>

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