

How of Action Research

A simplified process

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Research Goal

Aim of Action Research is to create valid and reliable professional knowledge to improve the task, self and the context as an integrated process.

A General Model

Although a few guidelines exist but there is no general model for all situations. The process varies in accordance with the nature of the action. That is why there are many forms of action research. (See my paper on **how can I persuade you to use action research?**)

It is useful to begin with a simple model, including planning, acting, reflecting and reporting learning as a continuous process of improvement. It must be an explicit process. When an individual uses this process for personal learning I call this **action learning**. In action research it should be a collaborative process designed to solve a professional problem to produce professional knowledge under the guidance of an experienced researcher. It is to be appreciated that we cannot always begin action with a clear written plan. Generally life unfolds itself. Now read my paper called Experienced Teachers' Planning in Fiji Institute of Technology.

Planning

It is better to plan in writing to perform a given task. Prepare useful plans based on reliable information. Planning is not always in writing. Sometimes it is partly in writing and partly in the mind of the actor.

Acting

A plan is only an aid for action. Act according to plan as far as possible. Reality cannot be fully captured in advance. Hence, it is important to exercise personal judgement in matching reality to plans and vice versa. Judgement improves with open mind and practical experience. Schon (1987) coined the term reflection-in-action to express thoughtful action and to produce what he called knowledge-in-action.

Reflecting -on-action

The aim is to generate valid and reliable knowledge. To produce such knowledge, reflect personally, with colleagues, other professionals, academics and professional literature. We have to learn to reflect-in and on action as an integrated process. Most practitioners use these processes sub-consciously to produce personal knowledge. These processes have to be made explicit.

Reporting Learning

The report is to make one's knowledge to share it with other stakeholders and to make it public, if desired. Ideally claim to knowledge should include improvements in self, task and the context as an integrated process and value of this knowledge for future actions in similar contexts.

Papers to Read

1. Punia R S (2004) **Action Researcher for practitioners: principles and practice.**
2. Punia R S (1992), **Ten studies of teachers' planning**

Case Record

1. MIPAM training needs analysis programme.

Books to Read

1. McNiff j , Lomax P & Whitehead , J (2006), **All you need to know about action research**, Thousand Oaks: Sage.
2. McNiff J & Whitehead J (2009) **Doing and Writing Action Research:** London: Sage.
3. Graham Gibbs (1988), **Learning By Doing: A guide to teaching and learning methods: FEU, London.**
4. Schon D A (1987), **Educating the Reflective Practitioner**, San Francisco CA: Jossey Bass.