Celebration of Teaching and Learning

Community-Based Participatory Research: Creating Knowledge to Lead to Social Change

Mary Brydon-Miller
College of Education and Human Development
If you want to truly understand something, try to change it.

Kurt Lewin

Or perhaps...
If you want to truly change something, try to understand it.
Gloucestershire Gateway Trust
D4D - Disability and Community: Dis/engagement, Dis/enfranchisement, Dis/parity and Dissent
Global Environmental Literacy
Everyone has questions...

What’s your Question?
• What problem or issue are you passionate about solving?
• Why is this important to you?
• What do you need to know to begin to find ways to address this issue?
• Who else should be involved?
Kurt Lewin  
(1890-1947)

“If you want to truly understand something, try to change it.”

Or possibly...

If you want to truly change something, try to understand it.
“Were all instructors to realize that the quality of mental process, not the production of correct answers, is the measure of educative growth something hardly less than a revolution in teaching would be worked.”
Paulo Freire (1921-1997)

“The teacher is of course an artist, but being an artist does not mean that he or she can make the profile, can shape the students. What the educator does in teaching is to make it possible for the students to become themselves.”
Basic Terminology

Action Research
Participatory Research
Participatory Action Research
Community-based Participatory Research
Appreciative Inquiry
Educational Action Research
Classroom-based Participatory Research
Action Science
Practitioner Inquiry
Participatory action research “combines aspects of popular education, community-based research, and action for social change. Emphasizing collaboration within marginalized or oppressed communities, participatory action research works to address the underlying causes of inequality while at the same time focusing on finding solutions to specific community concerns”.

(Williams and Brydon-Miller, 2004, 245)
Shared Values Stance

“...a respect for people and for the knowledge and experience they bring to the research process, a belief in the ability of democratic processes to achieve positive social change, and a commitment to action”

(Brydon-Miller, Greenwood, and Maguire, 2003, p. 15)
Moving toward More Emancipatory Action Research Practice

- **Technical Action Research**: Teachers as consumers and supporters of innovation
- **Practical (or interactive) Action Research**: Teachers as co-designers of innovation
- **Emancipatory Action Research**: Teachers as initiators, designers and advocates of innovation

The diagram illustrates a progression from participation to emancipation.
Why Do Participatory Action Research?

• To identify key issues facing your school, organization or community
• To deepen your understanding of these issues
• To generate data to inform action
• To examine the effectiveness of strategies to address the issue
• To create knowledge to guide advocacy and policy decision making
Developing Partnerships
Developing Research Partnerships

- The Established Community
- The Emergent Community
- The Potential Community
- The Hierarchical Community
- The Divided Community
- The Transient/Evolving Community
The Roles of the Action Researcher
Roles and Realms in Participatory Research

Realms of action researcher roles in our stories

A. Realm of advocacy
- Advocates for people who request we intervene
- Convincers with an agenda
- Negotiators for more prominent participation
- Political negotiators
- Whistle-blower
- Walking away when needed
- Empathetic relators
- Problematizers—“intentional instigators”
- Negotiator of specific cultural contexts
- Cultural navigators and bridgers across different cultures and socioeconomic classes
- Corridor walkers
- Coffee makers

B. Realm of relaters

C. Realm of dynamic sense-makers
- Reactors to dynamic situations
- Responder to unexpected demands and unanticipated needs

D. Realm of emergent designers
- Methodologists who custom design interventions and create new contextually relevant methods
- Organizational development (OD) facilitators & methodologists

E. Realm of traditional research
- Experts
- Traditional researchers

Emergent designers
- Methodologists who custom design interventions and create new contextually relevant methods
- Organizational development (OD) facilitators & methodologists

Practitioners
- Reactors to dynamic situations
- Responder to unexpected demands and unanticipated needs

C. Realm of dynamic sense-makers
- Reactors to dynamic situations
- Responder to unexpected demands and unanticipated needs

D. Realm of emergent designers
- Methodologists who custom design interventions and create new contextually relevant methods
- Organizational development (OD) facilitators & methodologists

E. Realm of traditional research
- Experts
- Traditional researchers

Roles and Realms in Participatory Research

Realms of action researcher roles in our stories

A. Realm of advocacy
- Advocates for people who request we intervene
- Convincers with an agenda
- Negotiators for more prominent participation
- Political negotiators
- Whistle-blower
- Walking away when needed
- Empathetic relators
- Problematizers—“intentional instigators”
- Negotiator of specific cultural contexts
- Cultural navigators and bridgers across different cultures and socioeconomic classes
- Corridor walkers
- Coffee makers

B. Realm of relaters

C. Realm of dynamic sense-makers
- Reactors to dynamic situations
- Responder to unexpected demands and unanticipated needs

D. Realm of emergent designers
- Methodologists who custom design interventions and create new contextually relevant methods
- Organizational development (OD) facilitators & methodologists

E. Realm of traditional research
- Experts
- Traditional researchers

Roles and Realms in Participatory Research

Realms of action researcher roles in our stories

A. Realm of advocacy
- Advocates for people who request we intervene
- Convincers with an agenda
- Negotiators for more prominent participation
- Political negotiators
- Whistle-blower
- Walking away when needed
- Empathetic relators
- Problematizers—“intentional instigators”
- Negotiator of specific cultural contexts
- Cultural navigators and bridgers across different cultures and socioeconomic classes
- Corridor walkers
- Coffee makers

B. Realm of relaters

C. Realm of dynamic sense-makers
- Reactors to dynamic situations
- Responder to unexpected demands and unanticipated needs

D. Realm of emergent designers
- Methodologists who custom design interventions and create new contextually relevant methods
- Organizational development (OD) facilitators & methodologists

E. Realm of traditional research
- Experts
- Traditional researchers

Roles and Realms in Participatory Research

Realms of action researcher roles in our stories

A. Realm of advocacy
- Advocates for people who request we intervene
- Convincers with an agenda
- Negotiators for more prominent participation
- Political negotiators
- Whistle-blower
- Walking away when needed
- Empathetic relators
- Problematizers—“intentional instigators”
- Negotiator of specific cultural contexts
- Cultural navigators and bridgers across different cultures and socioeconomic classes
- Corridor walkers
- Coffee makers

B. Realm of relaters

C. Realm of dynamic sense-makers
- Reactors to dynamic situations
- Responder to unexpected demands and unanticipated needs

D. Realm of emergent designers
- Methodologists who custom design interventions and create new contextually relevant methods
- Organizational development (OD) facilitators & methodologists

E. Realm of traditional research
- Experts
- Traditional researchers

Roles and Realms in Participatory Research

Realms of action researcher roles in our stories

A. Realm of advocacy
- Advocates for people who request we intervene
- Convincers with an agenda
- Negotiators for more prominent participation
- Political negotiators
- Whistle-blower
- Walking away when needed
- Empathetic relators
- Problematizers—“intentional instigators”
- Negotiator of specific cultural contexts
- Cultural navigators and bridgers across different cultures and socioeconomic classes
- Corridor walkers
- Coffee makers

B. Realm of relaters

C. Realm of dynamic sense-makers
- Reactors to dynamic situations
- Responder to unexpected demands and unanticipated needs

D. Realm of emergent designers
- Methodologists who custom design interventions and create new contextually relevant methods
- Organizational development (OD) facilitators & methodologists

E. Realm of traditional research
- Experts
- Traditional researchers

Roles and Realms in Participatory Research

Realms of action researcher roles in our stories

A. Realm of advocacy
- Advocates for people who request we intervene
- Convincers with an agenda
- Negotiators for more prominent participation
- Political negotiators
- Whistle-blower
- Walking away when needed
- Empathetic relators
- Problematizers—“intentional instigators”
- Negotiator of specific cultural contexts
- Cultural navigators and bridgers across different cultures and socioeconomic classes
- Corridor walkers
- Coffee makers

B. Realm of relaters

C. Realm of dynamic sense-makers
- Reactors to dynamic situations
- Responder to unexpected demands and unanticipated needs

D. Realm of emergent designers
- Methodologists who custom design interventions and create new contextually relevant methods
- Organizational development (OD) facilitators & methodologists

E. Realm of traditional research
- Experts
- Traditional researchers
A LITTLE LESS CONVERSATION

.. A LITTLE MORE ACTION PLEASE
Levels of Change

- Individual
- Group
- School or Organizational
- Local/Regional Policy
- National Policy
- Legal System
- International
Selected Action Research Methods
• Action Evaluation
• Asset Mapping
• Citizens’ Juries
• Digital Storytelling
• First/Second/Third Person Action Research
• Fishbone Analysis
• Fishbowl
• Focus Groups
• Future Creating Workshops
• Group Level Assessment
• Listening Guide
• Photovoice
• Research Circles
• Systemic Action Research
• World Café
• Youth PAR
Finding the right method...Questions to ask yourself

• Who are your participants?
• What is the issue you want to explore together?
• Where are you in the process?
• What kind of time and resources do you have available?
• What kind of change do you want to encourage?
Fishbone Diagrams
Photovoice
Indigenous Community-Based Research (ICBR)
Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR)
Appreciative Inquiry and Asset Mapping
Fishbowl Exercise
Theatre of the Oppressed
Systemic Action Research
“If action research is to be an effective political tool then it has to move beyond the single local group, team or organisation to work across organisations, networks and partnerships, on multiple sites and at multiple levels” (Burns, 2007, p. 15).
Quality Criteria for Action Research
Quality Criteria for *Action Research Journal*

1. **Articulation of objectives**
   
   The extent to which the authors explicitly address the objectives they believe relevant to their work and the choices they have made in meeting those.

2. **Partnership and participation**
   
   The extent to which the paper reflects or enacts participative values and concern for the relational component of research. By the extent of participation we are referring to a continuum from consultation with stakeholders to stakeholders as full co-researchers.

3. **Contribution to action research theory/practice**
   
   The extent to which the paper builds on (creates explicit links with) or contributes to a wider body of practice knowledge and or theory, that contributes to the action research literature.
4. **Methods and Process**

The extent to which the action research process and related methods are articulated and clarified.

5. **Actionability**

The extent to which the paper provides new ideas that guide action in response to need.

6. **Reflexivity**

The extent to which self location as a change agent is acknowledged by the authors.

7. **Significance**

The extent to which the insights in the manuscript are significant in content and process. By significant we mean having meaning and relevance beyond their immediate context in support of the flourishing of persons, communities, and the wider ecology.
Waste Water Management in the Philippines
Sustainable Livelihoods Foundation
Cape Town, South Africa

https://vimeo.com/181156023
Youth Suicide Prevention in Inuit Communities in Northern Canada
Michael Kral
Andean Alliance for Sustainable Development
Arts-Based Action Research
Growing Up Hard
Sarah Hellmann
Theatre of the Oppressed
The Misfits Theatre Company
Bristol, England

https://misfitstheatre.com/article/workshops-0
Interested?
Get Connected

• Mutual Support
• Resource Exchange
• Shared Learning
• Redundancy
• Sustainability
• Mentoring
Where to learn more...
Thanks!