



Participatory Action Research: Theory and Methods for Engaged Inquiry

By Jacques M. Chevalier, Daniel J. Buckles

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This book addresses a key issue in higher learning, university education and scientific research: the widespread difficulty researchers, experts and students from all disciplines face when trying to contribute to change in complex social settings characterized by uncertainty and the unknown. More than ever, researchers need flexible means and grounded theory to combine people-based and evidence-based inquiry into challenging situations that keep evolving and do not lend themselves to straightforward technical explanations and solutions.

In this book, the authors propose innovative strategies for engaged inquiry building on insights from many disciplines and lessons from the history of Participatory Action Research (PAR), including French psychosociology. The ongoing evolution of PAR has had a lasting legacy in fields ranging from community development to education, public engagement, natural resource management and problem solving in the workplace. All formulations have in common the idea that research must be done ‘with’ people and not ‘on’ or ‘for’ people. Inquiry of this kind makes sense of the world through efforts to transform it, as opposed to simply observing and studying human behaviour and people’s views about reality, in the hope that meaningful change will happen somewhere down the road.

The book contributes many new tools and conceptual foundations to this longstanding tradition, grounded in real-life examples of collective fact-finding, analysis and decision-making from around the world. It provides a modular textbook on participatory action research and related methods, theory and practice, suitable for a wide range of undergraduate and postgraduate courses, as well as working professionals.

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- Sales Rank: #1440650 in Books
- Brand: Brand: Routledge
- Published on: 2013-04-20
- Released on: 2013-03-06
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.69" h x 1.12" w x 6.85" l, 2.15 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 496 pages

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Editorial Review

Review

"This book is a must for anyone seriously committed to research that ensures the authentic participation and empowerment of people from all walks of life, be they from oral or textual traditions, women or men, old or young, articulate or hesitant, outspoken or reserved." – *Farida Akhter, Executive Director, UBINIG (Policy Research for Development Alternative), Dhaka, Bangladesh*

"This exciting and innovative book shows the patterns and processes that connect people and their social, practical and conceptual worlds in action. Its key themes of interdependence, relationship, and the need for dialogue make it a book today for tomorrow's world. It should be on all reading lists as a key resource for developing socially-oriented pedagogies for a more peaceful, productive and interconnected world." – *Jean McNiff, Professor of Educational Research at York St John University, York, UK and author of 'Action Research: Principles and Practice', now in its third edition (Routledge, 2013)*

"...a wonderful compendium, replete with practical tools and techniques that bring rigour and vigour to the international dialogue among action researchers... This is a serious volume worth the time of any action researcher who is curious about how western (including francophone) perspectives on PAR come alive. This volume makes a significant contribution to the collective craft of scholarly-practice among action researchers." – *Hilary Bradbury-Huang, Professor in the Division of Management at Oregon Health & Science University, Portland, USA and Editor of the journal Action Research*

About the Author

Jacques M. Chevalier is Chancellor's Professor Emeritus in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada.

Daniel J. Buckles is Adjunct Research Professor in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada, and an independent consultant.

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