E95.2031: Participatory Action Research (PAR)

Instructor:               Gary Anderson
Office Location:   Class Location:   TBD
Telephone
Class Time:                     Saturday, time TBD
Office Hours:   Email Address:

Catalogue description:  Introduction to various approaches to Participatory Action Research (PAR) with an emphasis on approaches that encourage the participation of as many stakeholders as possible. The course will cover action research traditions, issues of positionality, methodology, validity and ethics. Students will engage in various field activities.

Objectives:

1. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the various traditions of participatory action research. (evaluated by double entry journals)

2. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the various insider/outsider positions researchers can take, and related issues of a study’s trustworthiness, transferability, and ethics. (Evaluated by double entry journals and 3-5 page study reflections)

3. Students will demonstrate the ability to design a PAR study.

Grading:

50%    Participatory Action Research Proposal. See appendix A for description and criteria.

30% Double Entry journals and reflections on readings (See appendix B)

20% Class participation

Complete the Institutional Review Board’s online Human Subjects Tutorial with a score of 90 or above. (http://www.nyu.edu/osp/human.html).

Required Texts:


Recommended: Any text that reviews basic qualitative data gathering skills (ie. interviewing, observation, document analysis, discourse analysis, etc.)

**Session 1: What is Participatory Action Research?**

**Session 2: Getting Started: The evolution of a research question.**

**Required readings:**


**Session 3: Positionality of the researcher (Insider/Outsider).**

**Required readings:**


See also (not required):


**Session 4: The epistemological debate.**
Required readings:


See also (not required):


Session 5: Action research traditions

Required readings:


See also (not required)


London: IIED.


**Session 6: Action Research traditions**

**Required readings:**


**Session 7: Validity criteria for Action Research**

**Required readings:**


**Session 8: Creating “local” and “public” knowledge through Action Research: Naturalistic generalization.**

**Required readings:**


Session 10: Exemplars of Action Research

Required reading:


Required reading: Select one:


Session 11: Exemplars of Action Research

Readings: Select two from the following:


Session 12: autoethnography and self-study

Required readings:


See also:


Required readings:


See also (not required):


**Sessions 14, 15  Critical friends groups and presentations.**

**Appendix A**

As a final project, students will write a Participatory Action Research Proposal.

Criteria for Individual or group Participatory Action Research (PAR) proposal: A guide to self-evaluation.

1. **Quality of final product:** This criteria refers to the clarity and organization of your proposal, as well as issues such as grammatical correctness and use of APA style. Although proposals may vary in length, it is hard to imagine a proposal under 15 pages in length.

2. **Literature Review.** To the extent possible, you should review literature relevant to your research question. Although this review will likely not be as extensive as a review for a thesis or dissertation, it should be sufficiently extensive to frame your question.

3. **Discussion of Methodology.** Include a discussion of your positionality, validity criteria, and implications for ethics and IRB. Also provide specific details as to who your participants will be, what research methods you will use, and if possible examples of interview questions, observation protocols, document analysis, visual artifacts, etc.
4. Critical reflection. How will you reflect critically on the biases, paradigms, ideologies, and "gut reactions" you have as you begin the inquiry. How will you "keep yourself honest" as you gather and analyze data. How will your study move beyond confirming your prejudices to challenging them.

Appendix B

Suggested format for the Double Entry Journal

1. Author(s), year of publication, title of chapter or article and title of book or journal it came from, and the location and name of the publisher.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Left-hand side- Objective Summary &amp; Highpoints</th>
<th>Right-hand side- Subjective Reflections</th>
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| 2. Full summary of reading (5 or 6 sentences someone who hadn't read the reading could understand) | 1. Your thoughts on the overall content of the reading.  
2. How did it tie in with your experiences, beliefs, philosophy, prior knowledge?  
3. Have your ideas changed or been confirmed? |
| 3. List 6-10 thought provoking points or quotes from the reading | These are just prompts for reflection – you needn’t answer each one.  
1. Do you agree or disagree with each point?  
2. Are you annoyed, impressed, scared, dazzled or ?  
3. Is there anything more you would like to know about the topic?  
4. Are you aware of any literature or research that conflicts with the author's position?  
5. How did this change your understanding of this topic? |
| 4. 1 question you have. | 1. Why is this question important to you?  
2. What are the implications of the question? |