

Editorial

This issue of the *International Journal of Action Research* presents three articles and one report that express the “applicability” of action research in different social and organisational contexts, as well as its continuing strength. In times when much of research is market oriented, action research seems to be recovering much of its initial impetus for social change, for humanising work conditions, and for alternative ways of producing relevant knowledge.

The article “First person action research in complex social systems: Three stories of praxis” by Patricia A. Wilson, Elizabeth Walsh, and Alan Bush addresses the questions: “In a world increasingly characterised by uncertainty, social inequality, and ecological degradation, how can action researchers engage in ways that support regenerative systems change in the living systems of which they are part? How can the inhabitants of living systems co-create experiences and conditions of thriving?” The authors reflect on their action research experience in three different social and political contexts, one in Mexico and two different North American cities (Austin and Asheville). Having as basic reference the concept of thriving, the authors conclude with practical propositions for action research in the context of social complexity.

João Alberto Arantes do Amaral and Aurélio Hess, in the article “The dynamics of providing support to crack cocaine addicts in open-air drug scenes: the lessons learned by the ‘Helpers’ intervention project” analyse the relation between the support team and crack cocaine drug addicts in the city of São Paulo (Brazil). They highlight the need for a multi-disciplinary approach, and the openness to understand the complex process that involves different, sometimes conflicting, interests. The authors, based on a systemic approach, attempt to understand the dynamics of the intervention that influences and is influenced by several other dynamics. As they conclude: “We advise that drug addiction intervention programmes must be grounded in a systemic model that includes actions that are responsive to all the dynamics, especially the threats associated with drug dealers and the dysfunctional behavior of users.”

In the article “A Practical Model for Integrating Action Research Time into Second Language Education Schedule” Vahid Rahmani Doqaruni, Behzad Ghonsooly, Reza Pishghadam address the issue of time limitation in conducting action research in the field of

second/foreign language teacher education. Seven Iranian teachers of a private English language teaching institute participated in the present study that used first- and second-order action research. As result of the study, the authors point out that effective action research should be concerned with issues such as empowering teachers in dealing with a particular problem, creating a sense of belonging to a professional community, and helping them to value time allotment. These conclusions may also apply to other action research contexts and practices, where time limitation usually constitutes a hindrance for effective participation.

This issue of the *International Journal of Action Research* also presents a report that highlights some of topics discussed at the conference Action Research Network of the Americas (ARNA) under the title “Participation and Democratisation of Knowledge: new convergences for reconciliation”, in Cartagena de las Indias (Cartagena), June 12-16, 2017, following two important preceding conferences (1977 and 1997). Sandro de Castro Pitano, Cheron Zanini Moretti, Alfonso Torres Carrillo and Danilo Streck registered key concepts and attempted to organise them in topics: consolidation of values and principles of participatory research, decolonisation as an ethical, political and aesthetic commitment, the role of universities in relation to innovative and transgressive practices, epistemology from below and the transforming potential of systematising experiences, social and political context and action research.

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