Second Edition

Action Research in Education

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Action research is one of those terms that we hear quite often in today’s educational circles. But just what does it mean? If you ask three people to define action research, you may find yourself with three different responses. Typically, action research is undertaken in a school setting. It is a reflective process that allows for inquiry and discussion as components of the research.  

1. Themes in education that teachers should be constantly researching and educating themselves about their area of expertise, this is different from the study of more educational questions that arise from the practice of teaching. Implicit in the term action research is the idea that teachers will begin a cycle of posing questions, gathering data, reflection, and deciding on a course of action. Befittingly, action research (AR) is a popular research approach in education (Ferrance, 2000; Carr & Kemmis, 2003; Stringer, 2008), the focus of AR is in the improvement of an existing practice that is based around a problem, dilemma, or ambiguity from the situation in which practitioners find themselves in (Muratovski, 2016). The distinction between AR and other modes of design research is that it makes a dual commitment to study a system and concurrently collaborate with members of the system in changing it together, to what is regarded as a desirable direction (Huntjens et al., 2014). The importance of action research in teacher education programs: Three testimonies. Category: Refereed Professional Practice. Gregory S.C. Hine and Shane D. Lavery. This research paper explores the experiences of three teacher-researchers, Simone, Damian and Michael, who undertook an Action Research project in their respective schools as part of their postgraduate studies. As Head of Professional Learning, Simone conducted a research project designed to investigate how to improve a Peer Observation Program operating at her secondary school. Damian, also a Head of Professional Learning, explored ways to improve the profile of the existing Professional Development program at his secondary school, with a particular emphasis on overhauling the Staff Men.