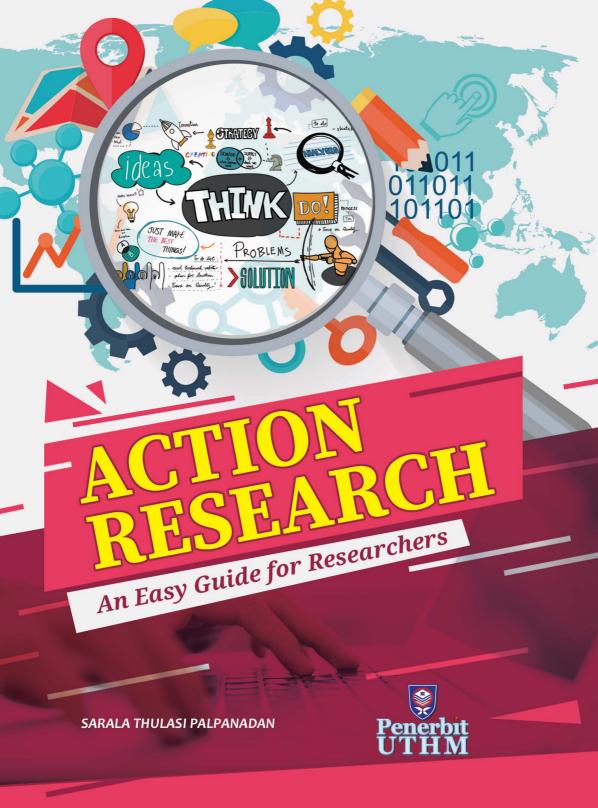# ACTION RESEARCH : An Easy Guide for Researchers

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Abstract: Action research is a reflective strategy that can be used by researchers for solving workplace issues in the real life settings. Researchers are able to explore various issues and plan for the change by conducting action research that ensures their continuous professional growth. The publication of this guidebook aims to introduce researchers not only to the models of action research but also to assist them to develop, implement, evaluate, and publish action research projects in their respective fields. It is hoped that this guidebook will be highly helpful and beneficial to the researchers from all walks of life. The guidebook will meet the needs of those who would like to embark on action research projects in various fields especially in the educational contexts. Thus, this book can be very useful for anyone who wishes to conduct action research, be it on a smaller scale or bigger scale study. This book highlights not only the ways of conducting action research effectively but also alerts researchers about the possible challenges that might hinder the flow of the research. Hence, this book should be kept with researchers for quick reference all the time.

Keywords: Action research, characteristics, implement, contexts

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Dedication

The author humbly dedicate this book to all those who have
contributed in the success of the production of this book.

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Preface

Action research is a reflective strategy that can be used by researchers to solve workplace issues in real life settings. Researchers are able to explore various issues and plan for the change by conducting action research that ensures their continuous professional growth.

The publication of this guidebook aims to introduce researchers not only to the models of action research but also to assist them to develop, implement, evaluate, and publish action research projects within their respective fields.

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CHAPTER 1

Knowing Action Research

Objectives of the Chapter

After going through this chapter, researchers should be able to internalize:

1. Introduction to Action Research
2. The Concept of Action Research
3. The Importance of Action Research
4. The Characteristics of Action Research

Introduction to Action Research

Action research is a systematic process of scientific inquiry into self-identified problems in certain areas to understand the complicated dynamics and develop strategies for the solution of the problem that bring about improvement in the practice (Kemmis, 2009). Action research can be conducted by anyone including staff, administrators and students to identify a solution to an existing problem. The new ideas suggested based on action research are considered more meaningful as it proposes concepts and theories which are backed up by data (Schön, 2017). Thus, the results and the outcomes of action research can be useful not only to the researchers personally but also to the entire department and institution as well as the society nationwide.

Researchers including novice and experienced, may have issues and problems at their workplaces or simply have a plan to improve the contemporary practise of an institution or organization. According to Liamputtong and Ezzy (2005), action research starts with the observations of real situation. In this case, action research can be opted as one the best ways to solve problems and improve the services as it is based on real life matters. Hence, researchers can start thinking of issues

CHAPTER 2

Designing Action Research

Objectives of the Chapter:

After going through this chapter, the researchers should be able to internalize:

1. The Planning of Action Research
2. The familiarization of Action Research Process
3. Ethical Considerations
4. Developing Research Questions

The Planning of Action Research

Basically, the planning of an action research involves several procedures. Firstly, it is a pre-requisite requirement for every researcher to know the context of the study that is going to be conducted. Subsequently, it is important to know the procedures involved and most importantly, researchers should know how to plan for it in order to implement the action research.

Researchers may consider several important factors such as the purpose, nature, awareness, and time before involving in the research for the best outcome. Researchers need to highlight the purpose of the action research comprehensively. Then, the nature of the problem has to be explored thoroughly. It is important to note whether the aim is to solve a problem, implement a change or make an improvement. The issue of the a research becomes much clearer in this way. Apart from that, the degree of awareness of the stakeholders regarding the subject being investigated has to be noted. Furthermore, the amount of time needed to be engaged in the different aspects of the study has to be decided. Other than that, the researchers need to decide on the procedure of carrying out the research by deciding on several areas. The areas are highlighted in Table 2.1.

CHAPTER 3

Implementing Action Research

Objectives of the Chapter:

After going through this chapter, the researchers should be able to internalize:

1. Conditions for Action Research
2. Action Research Beliefs
3. Action Research Models
4. The Selection of Suitable Model

Conditions for Action Research

Action research is currently gaining popularity among researchers from all walks of life, particularly educational background such as teachers, lecturers and administrators. Nonetheless, every institution, including companies and organizations should also encourage their members to be directly or indirectly involved in action research. They can either conduct action research individually or be part of an action research team conducted by some leaders. The result of action research can bring benefits to the institution as well as the community. Apparently, the execution and promotion of action research should be done systematically and legitimately. Therefore, there are some important conditions to consider before implementing action research in a workplace or elsewhere. It is essential to keep in view the following conditions where without these conditions the implementation process of action research may become more challenging or difficult. Hence, the process and procedure of action research should be made conspicuous to everyone through the following conditions.

CHAPTER 4

Action Research in Educational Setting

Objectives of the Chapter:

After going through this chapter, the researchers should be able to internalize:

1. An Overview of Action Research Phases
2. Action Research Cycle
3. Data Collection
4. Data Analysis

An Overview of Action Research Phases

Action research is a cyclic process. It can be divided into five phases. Basically, these phases are the main steps that researchers have to go through in order to complete the research for a desired change and improvement in the practices (Hendricks, 2006). It is important for those who conduct action research for the first time to follow these steps closely to receive the maximum benefits. Researchers may come from various institutional backgrounds such as students, educators, administrators, and society at large.

The first phase in the process of action research is selecting an area or focus. The area or focus could be related to any aspects of the development of students, teachers, lecturers, management, and the overall institution. In other words, the area of interest for the study that needs to be improved should be selected carefully. In general, there are two areas that can be easily identified as the main focus in the educational setting. The first area is the informal need assessment and the second area is the formal need assessment. The steps taken after selecting the area of focus are basically the same for both kinds of the assessments. The examples of area related

CHAPTER 5

Evaluating Action Research

Objectives of the Chapter:

After going through this chapter, the researchers should be able to internalize:

1. Challenges and Facilitation
2. Future Direction
3. Conclusion

Challenges and Facilitations

The researchers should keep in mind that the success of action research depends on the facilitation and support of others who are directly or indirectly involved in the study. These people can be the respondents of the study or others including the community workers, administrators and friends. These people may play key roles in keeping the action research moving in different ways such as encouragement, reflections, problem solving, guidance, feedback, and moral support. The process of action research could be more frustrating when there are problems and activities that do not work in the right direction. This will impose more pressure on the researchers and they might have to change their plans as per the demand of the situation (McNiff & Whitehead, 2012).

Apparently, the researchers should take note of challenges in executing action research after identifying the problems and planning the research procedures. There are many areas that need to be scrutinized well before embarking on the research. Some challenges may occur before, while and also after the research. Therefore, researchers should be prepared mentally and physically to go through them patiently. For example, the study may affect the normal institutions' timetable or routine. A sample situation is shared in Table 5.1 for further clarification.

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