

Action Research and Participatory Research: An Overview*

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In this article, we outline the main elements concerning the evolution of action research and participatory research that we have come across in the last decades. These concepts have come closer together along the years, and have become a strong methodological alternative, especially in people-driven projects. They have gained ground in the scientific world, in the fields of social science, as well as in other more conservative domains, as demonstrated by some of our experiences in Brazil. Their importance in the context of teaching, in universities and educational projects alike, is also stressed. The aspect of participation is defined in more detail in regards to the different degrees and forms of participation, as well as its religious component in Brazil. Action research and participatory research are, finally, methodologies that, in light of their potential for encompassing the stakeholders' view in the results and developing a sharing culture, must constantly be renewed in order to evolve and always be a rich source of knowledge and critical thinking.

Key words: action research in Brazil, participatory research, historical context, social practices, education for people

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