

# Participatory Methodology and Action Research in the Area of Health

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This paper aims to promote reflection on the viability and applicability of participatory methodologies, particularly action research, in the area of health. First it shows the human action which is socially conditioned and encompasses many different aspects is the main source of knowledge in action research. Then the paper discusses the objectivity and the scientific nature of this methodology, and its relevance to restoring the human dimension to health care. The conversion of biological and medical facts into collective actions is another issue highlighted by providing examples of how sanitary harmful consequences in terms of environmental or epidemiological issues can be reversed into social mobilisation and actions like education, prevention, health promotion and empowerment. It also intends to show how the use of this methodology in the university context through teaching activities, continuing educational, research projects and community based programs. Finally it concludes that action research offers special importance to build transformative actions and to make improvements on living conditions and health, as well as it is necessary to deal with health system failures.

**Key words:** action research in the area of health, health promotion, humanization, empowerment, action research in the university context

## Introduction

Participatory methodology encompasses a set of practices involving areas such as investigation, diagnosis, training and education, and planning. These practices all require the participation of those interested in the problems to be addressed, and in the search for possible solutions. Action research, on the