

Editorial

This issue of the *International Journal of Action Research* presents five articles from different socio-political contexts, as well as research practices related to different fields and experiences. What binds them together is action research as a method for co-producing knowledge together with stakeholders, be it in organisations, schools or sport events..

The first article, by John Andersen and Annette Bilfeldt, describes and analyses two contexts: nursing homes and libraries, where the authors show how action research may contribute to social innovation and empowerment in public welfare and cultural institutions, in a manner that supports the interests of marginalised citizens and local communities, and creates opportunities for positive change. Empowerment, action research and innovation constitute the conceptual reference, rooted in critical social theory. The article ends with two challenges to be considered in action research. The first one is about facilitating innovative forms of organisation, such as multifunctional community centres, and make them visible as relevant structures, rather than seeing them as special exceptions. The second challenge is about managing dilemmas in practical action research, especially related to power abuse in a supposedly democratic process of knowledge production.

Satu Kalliola, Jukka Niemelä and Ossi Eskelinen study the relation between work and university study in a growing competitive social context. Their conclusion is that instead of study-friendly practices at the workplaces, universities are adopting work-friendly practices, including e-learning, to support their students. The participants were students, teachers and advisors as well as employers. Using Democratic Dialogue as methodological procedure, the authors explore the different perspectives on this issue facing the majority of university students today. In spite of the difficulties, the authors are optimistic about the role the university can play in balancing conflicting interests.

The article “Field-configuring events and action research”, by Helge Svare and Eugenia Vathakou, attempt to match these two theoretical frameworks. Field-configuring events, as the authors explain, was developed within neo-institutional theory, the aim of which is to understand how institutions and organisations function and change. Analysing SpARTathlo event in the Greek town of Sparta, they demonstrate how the framework enables both a more multifaceted and more comprehensive understanding of the event, and how this has practical implications for the improvement of such events.

Erika Natacha Fernandes de Andrade and Marcus Vinicius da Cunha test the hypothesis that the comprehension of John Dewey's philosophical and educational conceptions can help teachers to construct significant possibilities in teaching artistic languages and forming creative subjects. The research context was the Baião, a Brazilian musical genre, chosen as an expressive way to produce aesthetic, rhetorical and poetic experiences. In the conclusion they point out that the Deweyan proposition about reflexive thinking, that it is developed through artistic and aesthetic experiences, teach us that scientific research can be lively and enriching, not limited by techniques or protocols unrelated to the moral values of the researcher.

The fifth article takes us back to elderly care. Rodney Beaulieu, Hyun Gu Kang and Shoko Hino study a community health programme that was piloted at San Marcos Senior Activity Centre in California over a two-year period, patterned from the Jaques-Dalcroze Eurhythmics method, known to reduce fall rates by half, and improve cognition and mood in older adults. The article presents the older adults' perceptions on the strengths and challenges of the programme, and their recommendations for making improvements in the next action research phase. The authors highlight that more research is needed to understand how physical activities might offset the degenerative process of aging, and improve health after an injury, and what kinds of activities are best for this purpose.

We thank the authors and reviewers for their collaboration, and expect the articles to be of interest for practitioners and researchers.

Danilo Streck
Editor-in-chief